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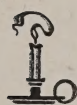
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The History of The
Middle District Association

1784 - 1958



COMPILED BY
Blanche Sydnor White

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INTRODUCTION

Messengers to the Annual Middle District Baptist Association, meeting with the Skinquarter Church in 1955, paused in business session to note the ONE HUNDRED and SEVENTY-FIFTH ANNIVERSARY of the Association in 1958. An anniversary Committee appointed by the Moderator, Mr. Jesse C. Green, included Rev. William C. Shawen, Rev. John Batkins, Rev. Wales P. Ingram and Rev. William D. Dietrich, Jr., Chairman.

This Committee unanimously agreed that a History be written of these 175 years of service and that, from the historical manuscript, a suitable pageant be written and presented during the Association Year, 1958. May 13 and 14 being the dates of the annual meeting, it was decided to present the pageant on Tuesday evening, May 13th at the host church, Branch's.

Miss Blanche Sydnor White, a beloved former leader of Woman's Missionary Union of Virginia, and able historian of Virginia Baptist History, readily agreed to undertake the project of preparing and writing the manuscript. During the writing of our history, Miss White was re-called to her duties as Executive-Secretary of Woman's Missionary Union of Virginia for an interim period. In spite of this additional responsibility, Miss White worked faithfully with the Committee. Months of diligent research and composition have gone into this completed volume. Your Committee accepts this work as a clear, concise presentation of the development of Virginia Baptists in our present counties of Amelia, Powhatan and Chesterfield over the past 175 years. Your Committee, on behalf of the Association, expresses sincere appreciation to Blanche Sydnor White for a work well done.

Woman's Missionary Union of Middle District, led by her Superintendent, Mrs. H. E. Jackson, accepted the responsibility of preparing and presenting the pageant. The services of Miss Robbie Blackwell of the Training Union Department, were secured and Miss Blackwell has written and is directing the pageant to be presented May 13. To these good ladies of our Association, our deepest appreciation.

To Mrs. Jean Bowman, Mrs. Dorothy Moore and Mrs. Norma Poats of Central Church, the Committee extends gratitude for their faithful hours of proof-reading.

We are grateful to God for our Past, for the opportunities of the Present and for the challenge of the Future. May God in His goodness and wisdom continue to guide the course of our Middle District Baptist Churches in their consecrated service.

Respectfully,

WILLIAM D. DIETRICH, JR., Chairman,
Anniversary Committee.

CHAPTER I

"THE PAST IS PROLOGUE"

1769-1784

RESOLVED, That our General Annual Association cease and that a General Committee be instituted, composed of not more than four delegates from each Association, to meet annually to consider matters that may be for the good of the whole society, and that the present Association be divided into four districts, Upper and Lower Districts, on each side of the James River. —

Resolution adopted in October, 1783, by the Baptist General Association of Virginia, sometimes called "a standing sentinel for political purposes."

Sixteen Virginia counties and 34 Baptist churches constituted the original field of the Middle District Association. There were, in 1784, approximately 3,000 Baptists in that territory. In 1958, one hundred and seventy-five years later, the seven district associations now occupying that field report 245 churches with a membership of 62,000.

It is not our purpose to trace "the rise and progress of Virginia Baptists" from their first appearance in the State or to tell the story of the origin and development of Baptist churches in the lower counties of Virginia. In his history, "The Baptists of Virginia," published in 1955, Dr. Garnett Ryland has made this information available to those who desire it. We are limiting our discussion to the extension of Baptist influence into the Counties of Amelia, Powhatan and Chesterfield; the organization of the first Baptist churches in those counties and to the fortunes and misfortunes of the Middle District Association which, in 1958, celebrates 175 years of continuous service.

The story began when, sometime prior to the year 1768, Samuel Thompson, a layman who had moved in 1750, from Caroline to Amelia County, was converted to evangelical Christianity. Through his witness certain of his neighbors were also converted. Mr. Thompson invited these friends into his home for prayer and religious conversation and read to them the sermons of George Whitefield and Samuel Davies. Hearing that there were in Southern Virginia preachers of the same truths proclaimed in the printed sermons, "certain men" in this group of "seekers" traveled to Halifax County and persuaded Jeremiah Walker to come to their community. On October 27, 1768, a petition bearing 38 names was presented to the County Court of

Amelia asking that George Walton's house be licensed as "a place for Separate Baptists to assemble and preach in." Simeon Walton's name appeared first on that list of petitioners. The Court refused to grant the license. Samuel Harris came to the County to reinforce the work of the younger preacher. It was reported that Mr. Harris preached with "such demonstration of the Spirit and power" that, in 1769, a church of 66 members was constituted. The church took the name of the River which ran close to its meeting-house and Jeremiah Walker, not yet 25 years old, became the pastor of "Nottoway," the mother church of Amelia, Nottoway and Lunenburg Baptists.

Samuel Thompson lived ten years after the constitution of Nottoway Baptist Church. His will, written in September, 1779 — less than a month before his death — was witnessed by his pastor, Jeremiah Walker. From the preamble of this Will we are convinced of his sincere piety and from the appraisal of his estate we learn that this pioneer among Southside Baptists was a man of considerable property. Deeds to four tracts of land were recorded in the Amelia County Courthouse, transferring to Samuel Thompson 750 acres of land, for which he paid 397 pounds in "current money of Virginia." This property, located on both sides of Little Nottoway River, on Barebone Creek and on the north side of Deep Creek, was in territory which, in 1789, was cut off to form the County of Nottoway. In addition, he owned land in Pittsylvania County. Mr. Thompson married Ann Jennings, member of a prominent family in Amelia County. To her and to their children he left personal property valued by the court appraisers at 13,500 pounds.

The Baptist movement in Powhatan and Chesterfield Counties owes much to descendants of French Huguenot refugees who, in the first year of the eighteenth century, found asylum in Virginia. In that year, 10,000 acres of land were granted to 500 Huguenot immigrants. Half of that grant, called by the Huguenots "Dover," lay north of James River; the other half, named by the refugees "Calais," was located in the present-day counties of Powhatan and Chesterfield. Baptists have hitherto failed to give to these victims of French Catholic persecution the praise which they deserve. They brought to the Virginia Colony an independence in thought and action and a depth of spiritual experience which played a large part in the political and religious history of the Old Dominion. It has been said that the vocation of these Huguenots was "to pray, to work, to sing," and one of their descendants has pictured a typical family at prayer-time singing together the Crusader's Hymn, 'Fairest Lord Jesus.'

As we read of the DuPuys, Trabues, Chastains, Martins, Flournoys, Hatchers and many other leaders in the origin and development of Baptist work in the territory of the Middle District Association, we are convinced that the French Huguenot influence was sec-

ond to none in the preparation of the soil from which the Baptist movement emerged.

We are told that it was "at the instigation of certain inhabitants of Cumberland County," that two Baptist ministers, William Webber and Joseph Anthony, crossed the James River from Goochland County and began to preach in the section of Cumberland which, in 1777, was cut off to form Powhatan County. Webber and Anthony had been baptized sometime in 1770, by John Waller. In 1771, the Cumberland Baptist Church (called Powhatan after that County was formed) was organized with 81 constituent members. David Tinsley became the first pastor of this church. When, in 1774, Mr. Tinsley was unable to perform his pastoral duties, "the forlorn state of the church stirred up the spirit of John DuPuy, who commenced first as an exhorter and then a preacher". John DuPuy became the second pastor of Powhatan Church. So beloved was he that the church was, for many years, known as "DuPuy's Meeting-house." Subsequent events indicate that Mr. DuPuy may have been one of the men who invited the Baptist preachers to Cumberland.

The movement which resulted in the constitution of a Baptist church in Chesterfield County began one year prior to the organization of Old Powhatan Church. In 1770, Webber and Anthony were invited to visit a neighborhood in the northern part of Chesterfield. The magistrates of that county, "finding that many were turning to righteousness (madness, as they would have it) . . . issued warrants and had them apprehended and cast into prison." Two of the magistrates bore the name of "Goode", a name to be prominently connected for many years with the leadership of churches in the Middle District Association. The chief persecutor, however, was Colonel Archibald Cary, a prominent churchman, who was determined to stamp out Baptist heresy in his county. From the old Debtor's Jail, a building of whiteoak hewn logs, crammed with mortar and securely weatherboarded, Webber and Anthony preached to the people who flocked to hear them. When the magistrate forbade the preachers the liberty of the jail yard, they preached from the window of their cell to the crowds who gathered outside.

Here, as in Powhatan County, the Huguenot spirit played a large part in the dissemination of Baptist principles. Daniel Trabue, writing years later of an experience which had troubled his conscience and stirred his soul, lifts the veil which had hitherto obscured events which led to the gathering of Chesterfield Baptist Church. An eye and ear witness of this stirring incident, Mr. Trabue wrote:

In December, 1770, Webber and Anthony were taken up and put in jail by Colonel Cary as disturbers of the peace. They were held in contempt by most of the people. One evening in the winter, Uncle John DuPuy, John Waller and Mr.

Wasser came to my father's and told him that Mr. Waller was a Baptist preacher and they were going to jail to visit the prisoners, Webber and Anthony.

Uncle John said he expected that the family and neighbors would be glad to hear the Baptists preach and that they might be notified of it as they came by the school-house. Father told Uncle that he would not suffer them to preach in his house. He did not have a favorable opinion of the Anno Baptists, as they were called in that day. My father said that he believed these people were false teachers and that we ought not to be drawn about with every wind of doctrine. At that time we had a good Establishment and a good parson and all was at peace. A number of people, hearing of this meeting, came to our house insisting that father let Mr. Waller preach, so that they might hear him and, 'proving all things, hold fast to that which was good.' Father refused, saying that he would not give offense to Colonel Cary and the church. Uncle John DuPuy then said: "Let him sing and pray and give his views on the Scriptures, sitting in the chair, but he will not stand up and take a text and preach." To this Mr. Waller agreed and he and Mr. Wasser sang several hymns and Psalms, kneeled down and prayed very earnestly that God would be with them and direct them aright.

Mr. Trabue then described the emotion in his own eleven-year-old soul as Mr. Waller, keeping his seat, read the account of Jesus' discourse with Nicodemus and explained the meaning of the new birth.

The imprisonment of Webber and Anthony was followed by the incarceration, in 1772, of Augustine Eastin; in 1773, by the arrest and imprisonment of John Tanner, John Weatherford and Jeremiah Walker, and in 1774, by the imprisonment of David Tinsley, who spent four months and sixteen days in the Chesterfield jail. The charge by some of our Protestant Episcopal historians that these preachers were criminals because they preached without a license from the Court has been discredited by court records. When certain of the Baptist preachers offered to comply with the provisions of the Toleration Act, Colonel Cary ruled that laws governing the Toleration Act in England and similar laws in the Virginia Colony were "not in force in Chesterfield County".

During the imprisonment of Augustine Eastin, Colonel Cary ordered that a wall from ten to twelve feet in height should be erected around the prison enclosure, its top to be lined with glass bottles set in mortar to prevent people from sitting on top of the wall. Security measures were increased during the imprisonment of John Weatherford. Soldiers were stationed outside the window of his cell and when, in his enthusiasm, he extended his hands through the bars, the soldiers were said to have slashed them with their swords. No persecution, however, prevented the preacher from delivering his message and no form of persecution discouraged the

people from attending the prison ministry. Weatherford watched from his window and when he saw a pole raised above the wall on top of which fluttered a handkerchief he understood that the people were ready to hear his message. His voice was strong enough to be heard beyond the wall and through his preaching, men who had never seen the face of the preacher, were converted.

Nine of the converts asked for baptism, but there was no one in the County free to administer the ordinance. On July 21, 1773, Rev. John Williams, Pastor of the Baptist Church in Cumberland (later Powhatan), received the following letter from Eleazer Clay:

Dear Brother Williams:

I have long looked for you to come down to see us and the prisoners. We would be glad to see you soon, for we wish you to baptize those that are now waiting for an opportunity. The Lord is carrying on a glorious work in our community, especially below the Court House. Let Brother Watkins know that the Lord has not passed by Mrs. F, but as some believe has placed her name in the Lamb's Book of Life. The preaching at the prison is not attended in vain, for we hope that several are savingly converted, while others are under great distress and are made to cry out, "What shall we do to be saved?" Time fails at this opportunity to tell all. The brethren daily look for you to come; they talk much about you. Remember me to all the Christian brethren.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.

When, for some reason, Mr. Williams failed to come to Chesterfield, John Weatherford suggested that Elder Rane Chastain, Pastor of the Buckingham Church, be asked to come and baptize the candidates. When Mr. Chastain arrived, he was ordered to leave the County or face arrest and imprisonment. Instead, he announced that he would preach at an arbor in the neighborhood. "I felt perfectly willing", Mr. Chastain is said to have declared, "to receive stripes for his sake who was willingly stricken for me". After the service, the Buckingham pastor baptized the nine Chesterfield candidates.

In the Virginia Baptist Historical Society's collection the earliest records of the Chesterfield Baptist Church have been preserved. In this book we find the following notation:

On August 22, 1773, the following members formerly belonging to the Church of Christ in Cumberland, (Powhatan) having received a dismissal from said Church for that purpose, were constituted into a Church to be known by the name of Chesterfield. Present: Reverends John Williams and William Webber. The constituents were Eleazer Clay and Jane his wife, John Clay and Elizabeth his wife, Joseph Mann and Mary his wife, William Woolridge and Sarah his wife, Richard Cheatham and Grace his wife, James Vest, Philip Vest,

Madalene Ammonet, Mary Trabue, Jane Trabue, Francis Lacy, Margaret Clay, Elizabeth Trent, Mary Trent, Watkins' Sary—in all 20.

The most influential member of the Chesterfield Church was Eleazer Clay, said to have owned property worth \$100,000. Some time before the first Baptist preachers visited Chesterfield County, Mr. Clay, while on a visit to Halifax County, had been impressed by the preaching of these people but had not joined the sect. Conversation with an acquaintance who had been converted under the preaching of Webber and Anthony renewed Mr. Clay's interest and he was baptized in 1771. The Chesterfield church elected Mr. Clay as its first deacon. In 1775, he was ordained to the full Gospel ministry and called as the first pastor of this church. From that time until his death, in 1836, he continued to serve Chesterfield as its pastor. This church, which adopted the name "Rehoboth", was commonly called "Clay's Meeting-house".

Another of the constituent members of Chesterfield Church was John Clay. "Sir John," as he was called, planted Black Creek Baptist Church, in the Dover Association, and served as pastor of old Chickahominy Baptist Church, now known as Winns, also in Dover Association. Eleven years after his death, in 1781, his widow moved to Kentucky. In that State, two sons of John Clay—Rev. Porter Clay and the Honorable Henry Clay—were eminently useful.

In 1810, Robert Baylor Semple wrote: "No County ever extended its opposition to and persecution of the Baptist farther than this, yet in few counties have Baptist principles prevailed more extensively than in Chesterfield".

The oldest Baptist church in the present-day territory of Amelia County is Sandy Creek. Authorities disagree concerning the year in which this church was constituted. The years 1770, 1771, 1779 and 1794 have been suggested by historians as probable dates of its organization. Semple states that Samuel Harris and James Read "planted" Sandy Creek. A recent discovery of the earliest records of Meherrin Church in Lunenburg County clarifies the origin of the Sandy Creek Church. An arm of the Meherrin Church, a meeting was held in its meeting-house as early as February, 1775. There is ample evidence to sustain the claim that this "arm" was established as early as December, 1773, but the name "Sandy Creek" was not mentioned prior to the 1775 date. This church was constituted as an independent organization in the year 1785.

In 1783, there were seven Baptist churches in Amelia, Powhatan and Chesterfield Counties, viz., Sandy Creek (an arm of Meherrin), Tanner's Creek (1776), in Amelia; Powhatan (1771) and Muddy Creek (1775), in Powhatan; Rehoboth (1773), Tomahawk (1777) and Skinquarter (1778), in Chesterfield.

The struggles and victories, sacrifices and achievements which make the religious records of Virginia one of the most thrilling chapters in the spread of Christianity, form a magnificent background for the history of the Middle District Association which, one hundred and seventy-five years ago, assumed responsibility for cultivating the territory which had been assigned by the General Annual Association to "the Lower District", south of the James River.

THE HISTORY OF THE
CHAPTER II
GRIEVANCES AND GROWTH
1784-1804

Being a small number, they could act more promptly; they would have fewer local matters and could, therefore, devote their attention more intently to those of general concern; and lastly, there being three other associations now in the State, besides the one called the General Association, these could unite in a General Committee and contribute their aid in measures interesting to all.

Robert Baylor Semple, in "The Rise and Progress of Virginia Baptists".

The "three other associations" in Virginia to which Dr. Semple referred were the **Ketocton**, constituted in 1766 by churches in northern and northwestern Virginia; the **Henry** (known since 1791 as Strawberry), which had been organized, in 1776 by churches in the southwestern part of the State, and the **Kehukee**, which was composed of churches in North Carolina and eastern Virginia. In 1791, the Virginia churches withdrew from the Kehukee and organized the **Portsmouth Association**.

In October (we presume) of 1784, men delegated by certain Baptist churches (whose identity we cannot confirm), located in the district designated as "the Lower District south of the James River," met at an appointed place (which has not been identified) and constituted the Middle District Association. Certain facts emerge from the shadows which non-existent records have thrown over the 1784 meeting of the Association.

Since it was the decision of the brethren to meet semi-annually and the second meeting of the Middle District Association was held in May, 1785, we conclude that the first (or organization meeting) must have been convened in the summer or fall of 1784. Delegates from the Middle District attended the first session of the General Committee of Virginia Baptists which was held on October 9, 1784. The appointment of those delegates was one item of business which was transacted in the first meeting of the District Association. John Williams was chosen as clerk of the Association. Semple states that "from the time of the division, in 1783, until this time (1810), Rev. Eleazer Clay has generally acted as moderator, a few sessions excepted." In dividing the territory, the Middle District did not follow

the pattern suggested by the General Association. The delegates decided to combine their energies within one Association. Beyond those few conclusions and facts, we have no information concerning the 1784 gathering in which the Middle District Association was constituted.

Fifteen delegates attended the May, 1785, meeting of the association. "The business of that gathering", we are told by Dr. Semple, "related chiefly to state grievances". It is probable that the principal business transacted in the October, 1785, associational gathering was an interpretation of the subtle and dangerous Assessment Act which, in 1784 had become State law. This Act provided for a tax to be levied upon all "titheables" in Virginia for the support of the Christian religion. In the *Journal* of the Virginia General Assembly we have convincing evidence that the Baptists of Middle District were second to none in their positive support of every action which pointed toward the complete separation of Church and State. From October 26 to the middle of December, 1785, the counties which were included in the territory of the Middle District Association, mustered, in opposition to the Assessment Act, the signature of more than 2,000 "sundry inhabitants" of their counties.

In December, 1785, Thomas Jefferson's Statute for Religious Liberty was adopted by the General Assembly and Virginia became "the first government in the world to establish by statute the complete divorce of Church and State", said to be "the greatest contribution of America to the sum of western civilization." All grievances, however, were not corrected by the Statute for Religious Liberty. Public property which had been given by the Colonial government to the Anglican Church had been secured by the General Assembly to the Protestant Episcopal Church. The repeal of this "Act of Incorporation", the sale of the "glebe" lands and the opening to all religious groups of church buildings which had been erected by tax funds were "grievances" which, during succeeding years, claimed the attention of the Association. On January 24, 1799, a Bill was passed by the Assembly ordering that "glebe" lands should revert to the State, but as late as October, 1804, the Middle District Association appropriated twenty dollars as its share in "declaring our respect" to the lawyers who advocated the suit in the Court of Appeals respecting the sale of the Manchester glebe lands in the County of Chesterfield.

What the historian described as "an evil and wintry state" succeeded the War of the Revolution and the struggle for religious liberty. Evidence of increased concern for denominational affairs was manifested by attendance upon the May, 1787, meeting of the Association of from three to four times as many delegates as had been

present in any former session. "Many churches reported revivals already commenced or ready to break forth". In May, 1788, it was agreed that the territory should be divided and the boundaries of a new Association were fixed according to the following lines:

Beginning where the Kehukee Association line crosses the Meherrin River; from thence upward by Lunenburg Court-house to the Double Bridges; from thence to Charlotte Court-house; thence to the Lawyer's Road to New London by the upper line dividing Strawberry District.

Churches situated near the border lines were advised to associate in "either district as might suit their convenience." This division resulted in the constitution, on May 16, 1789, of the Roanoke Association (known since 1926 as the Pittsylvania). Seventeen churches formerly associated with the Middle District joined with three North Carolina churches in organizing the new Association.

"Nothing of importance was done. The accounts received from the churches were interesting. It was a time of ingathering of souls." With these three terse sentences, Dr. Semple covered the period between the division of the Middle District and its May, 1791, semi-annual meeting. The Minutes of that meeting have been preserved. It is probable that the Association followed in its earlier meetings something of the same pattern described in those Minutes. We shall attempt, therefore, by a more detailed outline of the proceedings recorded in May, 1791, to recreate the atmosphere of earlier years.

The brethren gathered on Saturday. After "divine service", letters from the churches were read. There were present in this meeting representatives from 20 churches. The Moderator, Eleazer Clay, and the Clerk, Simeon Walton, were chosen by ballot. Visiting brethren were invited to participate in the discussions. Four committees were appointed. One was to report on the order of business to be followed by the Association; another was to prepare the circular letter which would be presented to the Association for adoption or criticism; the third would make arrangements for Sunday worship services, and the fourth would collect from the delegates the funds sent by their churches. The Association adjourned its business sessions until Monday morning.

The Lord's Day was the great occasion when people gathered from near and far to hear the outstanding preachers who had been assigned to the various building or arbors which had been prepared for the services. On Monday business was resumed. Queries were presented from the churches. One of those questions dealt with an issue which disturbed many of the churches, viz., "What shall we do with a member who has communed with other denominations?"

The answer was clearly stated: "The person should be tenderly dealt with as a transgressor of the rules . . . established by the Association".

Another church enquired: "Is it right in the sight of God for a minister to have the pastoral charge of more churches than one at the same time?" The answer of the Association was an unqualified "No"!

The scarcity of ordained ministers created a grave problem. Nine of the churches were without a pastor. The suggestion that "churches which could not sustain a pastor should merge with a neighboring organization," was not well received. The word "sustain" did not refer to the financial ability of the church, for the majority of the pastors who were not blessed with independent means supported themselves by engaging in secular employment. The difficulty lay in **finding** a minister who was not already engaged. The churches solved the problem by following the course suggested in the Gospel of Luke, tenth chapter, second verse. The number and ability of the laborers who were "thrust forth" into the Gospel ministry from churches affiliated with the Middle District Association constitute an inspiring challenge to the churches of this century.

Proper support of these laborers was emphasized. The circular letter sent from the associational meeting held in May, 1791, included the following timely statement:

We fear covetousness and want of reasonable support of the ministry is one great reason why we are so languid in vital religion. When our ministers ought to be out and working in God's vineyard, behold they are forced to leave the flock hungering for the bread of life, while they are struggling to provide necessities for their families.

The care of the churches was not neglected. The Association appointed certain persons who were authorized to visit every church in the district and:

Inquire into their state and standing; to see whether the Word and ordinances are duly administered; discipline kept up, gifts encouraged and licensed; a sufficient number of deacons ordained; pastors supported; flocks visited from house to house and their numbers known; churches destitute of pastors instructed in their duty; small constitutions not able to live to be dissolved; overgrown churches to be constituted for convenience.

One page of the 1794 meeting of the Association has been preserved. "Zion is, at present, in a languishing state," the circular letter from that gathering declared. That state was not immediately relieved, for in the circular letter which was sent from the meeting held in May, 1797, the following lament was published abroad:

We received letters from only 13 churches and from the same we have reason to weep at the great deadness and coldness which abound. Beloved brethren, we have been remiss in some particular manner, for surely the Lord would not so have hid his face. Sensible are we that the Lord hath a controversy with us, as he had against the Jewish Church, when he sought fruit from them and found none.

Relief was on its way. Writing in 1798, to the Editor of the British Baptist Register, Elder Benjamin Watkins, Pastor of the Spring Creek (Bethlehem) Baptist Church, in Chesterfield County, said:

... contrary to my fears, did the Lord visit us in a way of mercy by first stirring up the people, causing them frequently to assemble together and to carry on his worship by fasting and prayer. The sacred flame has spread to and fro in various parts of Virginia, so that we may truly say, "The Lord hath done great things for us, whereof we are glad". Our church at Spring Creek has added by baptism, since the revival, upwards of 150 members. Chesterfield Church also has received about the same number or more. Powhatan Church about 100.

The Association, meeting in October, 1800, received letters and delegates from 19 churches.

In the midst of spiritual prosperity, the shadow of another grievance disturbed the harmony of the Association. In 1789, the General Committee of Virginia Baptists had adopted a resolution, introduced by Elder John Leland, condemning hereditary slavery. Churches in the Middle District reacted strongly against this resolution, calling attention to the fact that the General Committee's province should be confined to matters relating to religious liberty. The controversial resolution was referred to the churches for consideration. The Minutes of the Association are not available, but we may accept as typical of the other churches the reply of Tomahawk, which discharged its responsibility in the following sentence: "We have taken under consideration the state of hereditary slavery and think it not the business of the church but of the legislators".

The General Committee, meeting in 1799, offended again when, in its circular letter directions were given for "The Observance of A Christian Sabbath". Seven of the twelve delegates present approved the letter, but the other five declared that, while they had no objection to the statement included in the letter, they "questioned the right of the general body to speak on matters of local church discipline". Elder George Smith, delegate from the Middle District Association, was one of the five objectors.

The General Committee, dissolved in 1799, proposed the organization of a General Meeting of Correspondence. To the organization meeting of the General Meeting, the Middle District commissioned

four delegates. In October, 1800, the Association called for a report from its delegates. Three men responded, but the fourth, none other than Rev. Eleazer Clay, Moderator of the Association, stated that he had not attended the General Meeting because he disapproved of its constitution. In the heat of the discussion, a vote of censure was passed, its advocates claiming that insubordination to the expressed will of the majority should not be condoned. Although this vote of censure was rescinded, a severe blow had been dealt to the harmony which hitherto had prevailed. For three quarters of a century, there would be echoes of the injury which this action had inflicted upon a venerable leader. In Ita May, 1801, meeting, the Association passed the following compromise resolution which satisfied neither party. That resolution stated:

This Association does not accede to the establishing of a General Meeting of Correspondence it being contrary to the collective voices of their churches; yet to obviate any grievance that may arise, they have chosen the following brethren: James Saunders, George Smith, Rane Chastain and Benjamin Watkins to meet with them at DuPuy's meetinghouse, in Powhatan County, the 3rd Saturday of this present month, May, 1801.

Here began the serious division of opinion which was to haunt the Middle District Association, causing dissension and division and weakening the churches of the Association during one of the most exciting and fruitful periods of the Christian movement.

The division of opinion concerning representation in state and national organizations, however, did not extinguish the affection of leaders in the Middle District for those in other District Associations. Twice each year the general evangelist, William Brame, brought or sent to the Middle District Association copies of the Minutes of other Districts. In 1800, the churches of the Middle District contributed "nine pounds, seventeen shillings and a penny for the use of brother William Brame to assist him (with others) to purchase a beast". Four years later another gift was sent by the Association to this good man.

As early as May, 1802, Cub Creek Church, in Charlotte County, presented to the Association the following query: "From the great extent of our district, which renders it inconvenient in many cases, would it not be well for the Association to take into consideration a division of the same?" The Association thought it inexpedient at that time to consider division, but in October, 1803, with 22 churches represented in its meeting, Chesterfield Church renewed the request. Perhaps, the Chesterfield query touched a more responsive chord in the hearts of the delegates, for instead of **convenience**, of the churches,

"the glory of God and the furtherance of the Gospel" were the considerations urged by the older church.

The answer of the Association to this request was the call for a Convention to meet at Nottoway meeting-house on the second Saturday in May, 1804, "for the purpose of considering the propriety or impropriety of a division in our district". The Portsmouth and Kehukee Associations were notified of this meeting and its purpose, that they might send messengers if they wished, "to consult together whether it will be agreeable to them to annex a part of their districts with ours so as to make each of our districts more compact".

The Nottoway Convention resulted in the constitution of two new associations. In October, 1804, 12 churches participated in the organization of the Meherrin Association.* Eleven churches sent letters and delegates to Walker's meeting-house in Prince Edward County, where in May, 1805, the Appomattox Association was formed. County lines were not strictly observed, but most of the churches in Charlotte, Campbell, Mecklenburg, Lunenburg, Prince Edward, Buckingham and Amelia Counties associated themselves with one of the new associations. The churches in Amelia County soon returned to the Middle District.

Within a period of less than 21 years, the Middle District Association had launched three District Associations. Although, in 1804, the mother Association was reduced in territory and in number of churches and membership, and was divided in opinion concerning co-operation with the State body, the churches which adhered to the older Association faced the future with devotion and determination. Meeting in October, 1804, the nine churches which at that time, composed the Middle District Association, agreed:

That, although a division of our district hath taken place at this session, we endeavor to keep, as far as possible, the unity of the spirit by visiting each other; and that we will at our respective associations appoint messengers to attend the other two sister associations.

With three main goals before them—the glory of God, the furtherance of the Gospel, the unity of the spirit, the Middle District Association entered a new era in its history.

*In 1833, six of the churches which composed the Meherrin Association joined the Campbellite movement and the others united to form the Concord Association.

MIDDLE DISTRICT ASSOCIATION

CHAPTER III

COMPROMISE AND CO-OPERATION; DECISION AND DIVISION

1805-1837

By referring to the minutes of the Association, we see that for a long period no reports were read and no general subjects discussed. The business matters that received attention were generally of a local character and of but little importance. Consequently, the early history of this body is extremely meagre. Preaching was the principal feature. Though most of the preachers on those occasions were plain and uneducated men, yet they usually preached with much unction and power and made profound impressions upon the eager crowds that followed to hear the Word. Sometimes revivals would spring up as the result of these general meetings. —

Rev. Luther W. Moore, in "A History of the Middle District Association".

For a period of 30 years there were within the Middle District Association two distinct parties. The majority, led by the veteran minister, Rev. Eleazer Clay, were opposed to co-operation with State and National Missionary, Bible, Temperance, and Education Societies. The attitude of the majority was quaintly expressed by Mr. Clay when, in the 1820 meeting of the Association, Dr. Robert Baylor Semple urged the Middle District to unite with the General Meeting of Correspondence. Declining to put the question to a vote, Moderator Clay replied for the Association by saying: "I do not believe that a General would put up with soldier's wages". By this statement he indicated his fear that general organization might attempt to dictate to the churches and his belief that membership in religious bodies should not be based upon a stated financial contribution.

At no time in her history, however, could the Middle District Association have been considered anti-missionary. The minority group, led by Rev. Benjamin Watkins, Edward Baptist and a few laymen, notably, John H. Steger of Amelia County, preferred to compromise with the anti-co-operation party rather than to divide the Association. **Peace** and **harmony** were the prevailing keynotes of circular letters approved by the Association during that period. Although the Association paid an exorbitant price for a false peace, the years of compromise were not so barren of fruit as the statement taken from

Mr. Moore's History and quoted at the head of this Chapter would lead us to believe. Individuals, churches and groups within the churches and the Association were prominent in missionary and educational movements of that generation.

In May, 1817, Edward Baptist was elected a member of the Board of the Triennial Convention and in August of that year Benjamin Watkins, acting for the Middle District Association, sent \$121.00 to the treasurer of that Board. As long as he lived, Mr. Watkins was listed as "the correspondent from Middle District" for the Triennial Convention's Board of Foreign Missions and continued to gather and to give money for the missionary enterprise. Luther Rice, agent of the Convention, is recorded again and again as a visitor to the annual meetings of the Middle District. He and other representatives of State and National missionary societies were received by the Association with courtesy and heard with varying degrees of warmth. When, in 1829, Benjamin Skinner, an appointee to the Liberian Mission of the Triennial Convention, visited Virginia, he received from Middle District a most cordial welcome. Contributions gathered in the Annual Meeting of that body for Mr. Skinner's outfit and salary exceeded those received by him in any other association of the State.

One of the most baffling anomalies in the history of Virginia Baptists occurred during this period when Edward Baptist, one of the two men responsible for the conception of the Baptist General Association of Virginia and chairman of the committee which drafted, in 1822, its first constitution, sat in that body, either by sufferance of the delegates or by credentials from another Association. In 1829, the Cartersville Female Missionary Society corrected this irregularity by sending Mr. Baptist as its delegate and, in 1832, the Muddy Creek Church, by a contribution of \$30.00, made Mr. Baptist a life-member of the General Association. The Domestic Missionary Society of the Hephzibah Church, first recorded in 1832, was another strong arm of the State organization.

On November 12, 1826, a meeting was held in the Peterville meeting-house in which the Middle District Missionary Society was organized. The object of the Society, as stated in its Constitution, was "to spread the Gospel either among the destitute in this State or among the Indians in our own country, or among the heathen in foreign countries, according to the wish of any subscriber." This society was composed of men and women; Edward Baptist served as its President, Chastain Brackett as Secretary, and James Woodfin as Treasurer. Four ladies were elected as members of its Board of Managers, viz., Mrs. Sarah Walthall, Mrs. Eliza Hening, Mrs. Elizabeth L. St. Clair, and Mrs. Jennet Bryan.

Another Virginia institution which was destined to exert tremen-

dous influence upon the Middle District Association was the Virginia Baptist Education Society. This, too, was largely the brain and heart child of Edward Baptist. Organized in June, 1830, the Education Society adopted six ministerial students, placing them with Mr. Baptist at Dunlora, the 900 acre estate in Powhatan County of Mrs. William Hickman. Mr. Baptist had married the foster-daughter of the Hickmans and made his home at Dunlora. In October, 1830, the first class of what was to become the University of Richmond began their studies. Mrs. Hickman gave these young men room and board and Mr. Baptist was their instructor. In October, 1831, nine students enrolled in this one-man College and Theological Seminary. The Powhatan Female Education Society, organized in 1830, for the support of students in Columbian College in Washington, D. C., became the pattern for numerous similar societies across the State.

There was no question of non-fellowship with churches and individuals who advocated co-operation. Missionary societies composed of both men and women and Female Missionary Societies were organized in several of the churches. The Powhatan Bible Society was organized in 1826 and societies for the support of State and National Bible Societies were organized, in 1836, in Bethlehem and Tomahawk churches. Sunday schools were reported, in 1828, in Painsville and Skinquarter churches and at Branch's meeting-house. A union Sunday school, composed of Presbyterian and Baptists, was in that year reported at Powhatan Courthouse. Those organizations, however, were not mentioned in the Minutes of the Middle District.

There was a sharp decline, during this period, in the number of ministers serving the churches of the Association. In 1815, the eight churches composing the Middle District reported eleven ordained and three licensed ministers; in 1817, nine ministers were reported; in 1820, the churches had increased to nine, but the number of ministers had decreased to eight.

We have dwelt somewhat at length on activities supported by the minority party within the Association. There were many matters on which the Middle District leaders were in complete agreement. The Association, by formal action, "approved the proposal of Brother Henry Keeling to publish a monthly magazine in Richmond." This magazine, **The Evangelical Inquirer**, was the forerunner of the weekly **Religious Herald**, which was warmly advocated by the Middle District.

Semi-annual meetings of the Association were continued until 1807, when it was decided to substitute for the spring session one or more union or group meetings, to be held in different sections of the Association. This proposal, when presented to the churches for approval, brought from Tomahawk Church the following laconic reply:

"Decided in favor of the union meetings if they could be permanently fixed and ministers could summon up courage and zeal to attend and dispense the Word". Since the union meetings were continued until 1824, we conclude that the other churches agreed with Tomahawk and that the ministers "summoned" sufficient courage and zeal to dispense the much needed and greatly desired Word.

We detect in the circular letters of this period a growing sense of responsibility for the development of a more wholesome spiritual atmosphere within the churches. From one of the annual gatherings, the Association sent out the following admonition:

... search out the cause of your spiritual leanness and, when found, repent and do our first work, such as love, zeal and gratitude. We ought not to forsake the assembling of ourselves together but attend on the worship of God strictly. Keep up the worship of God in your families in a particular manner.

From another associational meeting, the circular letter was devoted to an interpretation of church discipline, intended, the writer said, "to reclaim, bring back, restore, etc. . . . and not to cut off and drive away. "In the October, 1813, meeting, the Association asked the churches to set apart Wednesday, December 1, for "fasting, humiliation and prayer before Almighty God." They asked that "all servile labour be dispensed with", thus acknowledging their concern for the spiritual nurture of the slave members in their congregations. Again and again these "days" were suggested by the Association and observed by the churches.

An encouraging note was sounded from the 1823 Annual Meeting. "The young people about Sandy Creek (Amelia County) and in the adjacent neighborhood appear to be much impressed", the circular letter stated. "A tavern, long a scene of dissipation, has become a house of prayer." "The glorious news of a mighty work which the Lord is now carrying on in this part of his vineyard", was reported in the 1825 Annual Meeting, which was held in Powhatan Church. By common consent, the Association voted, in 1828, "to recommend to our brethren to unite with the general Concert of Prayer for the spread of the Gospel; also that the Lord should visit our borders with the reviving influence of his Holy Spirit". In 1830, the Association bewailed once more "a state of coldness". Tomahawk, Bethel and Chestnut Hill churches pledged \$25 toward the expenses of an associational missionary, Thomas Sydnor, a ministerial student at Columbian College in the District of Columbia, spent several weeks of his vacation in the Middle District Association. Mr. Sydnor reported a kind reception everywhere, but some of the brethren questioned the necessity of preparing for the ministry". "If you are called to preach," they asked, "why do you not quite college and enter at once

upon the work?" Others, however, encouraged him to continue his studies. Thomas Hume, commissioned by the General Association, also spent a few months in general missionary work in the Middle District.

The general revival which, in 1831, swept across the Association, began in the practical activities of nine ministerial students who were studying at Dunlora, in Powhatan County.

On May 6, 1831, the following paragraph from a letter written by Edward Baptist, appeared in the **Religious Herald**:

Since our institution commenced its exercises, it has pleased God to bless the labors of our young brethren in an extraordinary degree, and we desire to praise Him for it. A few months ago a glorious reformation commenced in this vicinity, which has already embraced considerably above a hundred persons and the work is still progressing. I have baptized 57 persons within a few weeks past and 20 or 30 more are about to follow their example.

In subsequent issues of the **Herald**, announcements appeared of revivals. A meeting at Chesterfield Church, commencing on August 13, with "large congregations and deep interest;" at Salem, with baptism of 30 persons; and at Skinquarter, concerning which, Elder Samuel Dorset wrote:

The work is great and powerful; it is spreading over Chesterfield and the lower edge of Powhatan. Within the last two weeks in the neighborhood of Skinquarter, 41 have professed faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and followed him to the liquid grave. The following week 25 more were baptized.

It was estimated that during the associational year which closed in August, 1831, 800 had been baptized into the membership of the 17 churches which, at that time, composed the Middle District Association. Ten of the churches reported 568 additions by baptism during the year.

If we were to attempt we should fail to give a full description of the mighty work of the Lord which we have seen (the circular letter of 1831 stated). Our limits seem to forbid us to give in detail all the information received from the several churches that have recently shared in this revival. Within the District it appears to have commenced in the upper part of Powhatan last spring and has been moving on southeastwardly, slowly, but in awful grandeur... large accessions have been made to some of the churches; 94 to Grub Hill since our last Association; Chesterfield, at this time is richly participating in the heavenly blessing; Tabor and Hermon rejoice and the solitary places are made glad. The strongholds of Satan are thrown down and, in a measure, deserted.

Through the **Religious Herald** we learn that during the months of August and September, 1831, there were 47 additions by baptism to the Chesterfield Church, 30 to Salem, 66 to Skinquarter and 32 to Second Branch, all of them the fruits of this great revival.

Doctrinal purity was another measure on which the Association was in complete agreement. When, in 1832, the followers of Alexander Campbell carried into that camp two of the churches which had been connected with Dover Association and divided seriously six others and when six churches in the Meherrin Association went over to Campbellism, Middle District lost to that movement only one church and part of another. The majority in Painville (sometimes called Chinquepin) Church withdrew from the Middle District, but the minority group in that church organized the Union Church which promptly applied for admission into the Middle District. Three years later, Chestnut Hill Church in Nottoway County, was "cut off" by the Middle District Association "in consequence of having identified herself with those who have embraced the peculiarities of Alexander Campbell. The Middle District Association declined to seat fraternal delegates from the Meherrin Association "because of prevalence of Campbellism and opposition to benevolent institutions, manifested by churches in that body".

In 1833, it was agreed that "the matter of furnishing numbers in fellowship be referred to the churches and that all those churches that feel no difficulty about sending their numbers be requested to send them to the next Association".

The period of compromise ended with the annual meeting which was held in August, 1834. This was the first meeting in which "the state of the churches" was reported. It was estimated that in the 17 churches connected with the Association, there were 2,000 communicants. The following information was recorded in the minutes of that session from reporting churches.

CHURCH	COUNTY	MEMBERSHIP	GENERAL INFORMATION
Spring Creek (Bethlehem)	Chesterfield	486	A Sunday school with 60 members.
Bethel	Chesterfield	99	A Sunday school, a Tract Society, Missionary and Temperance Societies.
Hephzibah (Branch's)	Chesterfield	72 whites 44 black.	A Sunday School and Domestic Missionary Society.
Cartersville	Cumberland	36	A prayer meeting once each week.
Zoar	Chesterfield	150	
Skinquarter	Chesterfield	172	
Mt. Pleasant	Dinwiddie	21	
Chestnut Hill	Nottoway	27 whites 64 blacks	
Union	Amelia	34 included in one black.	
Sandy Creek	Amelia	203	
Grub Hill	Amelia		Temperance Society. All but two or three white members are members of Temperance Society. \$30.00 contributed to Domestic Missions.
Salem	Chesterfield		Received by baptism since last meeting 50 members.

So gradual had been the change of sentiment within the Association that we are startled by the following appeal for co-operation which was included in the circular letter sent out to the churches from the 1834 Annual Meeting. This letter, written by Richard Gregory, a layman in Hephzibah Church, counselled the churches to—

use all the means with which a bountiful God has blest us, to promote the spread of the Gospel, not only among ourselves but among all those nations which have never yet heard the name of Jesus and who are now perishing for lack of knowledge. To this desirable end, let us be up and doing. Let us cheerfully aid and encourage all those institutions which are calculated to improve our ministry, to promote temperance and, more especially, to send the Bible to the benighted Heathens and other destitute places.

There is no record that the letter was challenged by any individual or church. Leadership in associational affairs was passing into the hands of younger men. The grand old warrior, Eleazer Clay, was very feeble. Benjamin Watkins died in 1831 and, in 1835, Edward Baptist left Virginia for Alabama. Newcomers to the Association, Rev. Valentine M. Mason, since 1829 the Agent of the General Association, succeeded Mr. Baptist as pastor of Grub Hill (since 1835, known as Mt. Tabor) Church. In 1837, Rev. Jesse Witt became pastor of Muddy Creek and its three mission branches. Rev. Luther W. Moore, who came into leadership about this time, is our authority for the statement that Mr. Mason and Mr. Witt played the leading role in Middle District affairs during this period of decision.

Eighteen churches were represented in the 1835 Annual Meeting of the Middle District Association. On the first day of that meeting, it was agreed that the General Agent of the General Association "be at liberty on tomorrow (the Lord's Day) to make some remarks and afterwards take a collection for the General Association Fund". The issue was placed squarely before the Association. Compromise had yielded to decision and decision was expressed in the following resolution:

Agreed by a majority of this body that we appoint one delegate to attend the next General Association; whereupon Elder John Woolridge was appointed and, in case of (his) failure, Elder Samuel Dorset was appointed his alternate.

It was decided also that:

Whereas this Association has appointed a delegate to the next General Association, and whereas misapprehension may arise as to the right of using the funds of the churches contributed to this body:

Therefore, Resolved, unanimously that this Association disclaim all right to use any funds for the above purpose unless specifically given for that object.

There was a meeting of brethren who advocated co-operation with the General Association and in this meeting \$10.57 was collected, 57 cents more than was required to secure one seat in that body. In the Sunday collection, the congregation had contributed \$46.28 more toward the funds of the General Association. Thus it was done! Fairly, cautiously, firmly, the Middle District Association moved from isolation to co-operation.

In October, 1835, representatives appointed by the Zoar, Skinquarter, Sandy Creek and Rehoboth (Chesterfield) Churches met at Rehoboth and voted to withdraw from the Middle District Association "at least until we shall be convinced that they have not departed from the simplicity of the Gospel or until they shall retract from that which we conceive to be their error". In March, 1836, nine delegates representing the four seceding churches, met and organized what they termed "The Body of Old Fashioned Baptists", but which was commonly called the Zoar Association. Within the year, Second Branch and Salem joined the new Association.

Within those six churches there was a minority who favored co-operation. Mt. Hermon, organized in 1835, from Skinquarter Church, and Mt. Olivet, constituted in 1836 from Second Branch, were organized by these minorities and promptly applied to the Middle District Association for admission. Other minorities joined co-operating churches near their homes.

Reduced by this division to eleven churches, the Middle District Association held, in August, 1837, its 54th Annual Meeting. In this meeting the following forward looking resolution was adopted:

That this Association affectionately request the churches in our connection to indicate their state and condition, the number of members, male and female, the number of baptisms during the year, what is the state of piety in the churches and prayer and social meetings for the worship of God which are cherished.

Peace and harmony were no longer dependent upon compromise, but rested firmly upon the solid foundations of **one heart and one mind bent on progress.**

MIDDLE DISTRICT ASSOCIATION

CHAPTER IV

REDEEMING THE TIME

1838-1860

The Middle District Association . . . has been in existence 64 years and what, your Committee would ask, has she done for the conversion of the world? We have met year after year, heard introductory sermons, read letters and passed a few unavailing resolutions, while thousands of souls in heathen lands have been dropping into perdition every day for want of the bread of life. —

Extract from Report on Foreign Missions
adopted by the Middle District Association in
August, 1848.

A less devoted group of brethren might have found in the situation which faced the Middle District Association in August, 1838, cause for some degree of pessimism. In 1784, the territory of this Association included sixteen Virginia counties. In 1838, with the exception of one church in Dinwiddie County, the territory of the Association was limited to Amelia, Chesterfield and Powhatan Counties, and even in that reduced field there existed another Baptist association which declined fellowship with the older body. There was no note of pessimism, however, when 31 brethren delegated by 11 churches which reported a combined membership of 1,960, more than two-thirds of whom were Negroes, met at Hephzibah Church for the Annual Meeting of the Middle District, then in its 55th year of organized service. Certainly, there seemed to be enough to do at home, but from that meeting there went out a call for conquest both at home and abroad.

During the next two decades the Association evaded no denominational responsibility. In cultivating the field at home three main emphases were stressed, viz., the Sunday school movement, the employment of an associational missionary and the most strategic deployment of its ministers in caring for pastorless churches and destitute areas within the Association.

There was no report, in 1838, concerning the number and the strength of Sunday schools, but the churches were urged to undertake with vigor the maintenance of such schools. It is probable that the Sunday school reported, in 1828, by Hephzibah at the Branch's meeting house, was, in 1838, dormant, but in 1832 a school had been organized in Spring Creek Church; schools were established in Bethel,

Tomahawk and Mt. Hermon during the next three years; Muddy Creek reported one Sunday school in 1840 and, in 1843, three schools were being maintained by that stalwart congregation, two of them in unchurched areas; Powhatan reported two Sunday schools in 1843. Sometime prior to that year, the Hephzibah school had been reactivated. With 10 officers and teachers and 45 "scholars", (six of whom had been converted during the preceding year, the Hephzibah school sent J. S. Walthall and W. H. Gregory as delegates to the June, 1843, meeting of the Virginia Baptist Sunday School and Publication Society.

A committee for the promotion of Sunday school work was appointed, in 1844, by the Association, but not until 1851 were "Sunday school Statistics" included in the Minutes. In that year Spring Creek and Tomahawk Sunday schools were represented in the State Sunday school gathering. William E. Martin and S. J. Winfree represented Spring Creek and D. O. Lockett and D. B. Winfree were the delegates from Tomahawk. The Hephzibah and Mt. Hermon schools, while not represented in the State meeting, were reported in the associational records for that year. The committee urged its cause with firm conviction. We find in its 1852 report the following statement:

After all, we have heard of the inconvenience of keeping up Sunday schools in the country, it is still our deliberate opinion that they are entirely practicable . . . The difficulties we encounter are mostly of our own making. For the sake of a few miles' travel, we have divided ourselves into so many and such small churches that we are unable to have preaching more than once a month and thus we have abolished the apostolic practice of meeting every Lord's day for religious services. If every church had regular preaching weekly, as it should have, if every member would attend punctually his own meeting and realize his duty to promote the cause of Christ within the bounds of his own church, then the keeping up a Sunday school would be an easy matter.

Conservatism and convenience did not yield immediately to the persuasive efforts of those who promoted the Sunday school cause. In 1838, it was decided to change the form on which the churches reported annually to the Association. The new form included a section for Sunday school statistics and a section on which the churches were requested to report contributions to causes outside the associational territory. "Appendix 4" of the 1860 Minutes listed 22 Sunday schools in the Association, with an enrollment of 1,213 officers, teachers and "scholars".

The employment of an associational missionary was an even more difficult assignment than was the establishment and maintenance of Sunday schools. An effort was put forth, in 1841, to secure for two months the services, as an associational missionary, of Rev. Jesse

Witt, but there is no evidence that Mr. Witt accepted the assignment. Eleven years later, \$500 was pledged toward the salary of a missionary by the delegates who attended the Annual Meeting. Rev. Gilbert Mason, a man of extensive experience in this field, having served as state missionary in the Petersburg and Lexington areas and, more recently, as missionary in Manchester in which town in that year he had led in organizing a church, became in September, 1857, the missionary of the Association. The first report rendered by Mr. Mason more than justified his selection. In ten months he had conducted 11 protracted meetings, preached 150 sermons, visited 300 families, stimulated in the churches the grace of giving, collecting by his own efforts almost as much as the Association and the General Association had paid him in salary. Through his ministry, 127 had been added to the churches. Mr. Mason continued to serve as associational missionary until August, 1860, when he accepted the pastorate of the Hephzibah Church. Mt. Hope Church, in Amelia County, was organized as a direct result of his work. Mr. Mason was succeeded in January, 1861, by Rev. R. N. Lee, but in July of that year, due to the exigencies of War, the office of associational missionary was discontinued.

In 1843, Virginia Baptists began to explore the method of sending into neglected areas men who were called colporters. The colporter might be a student who served during the summer months or a more experienced minister who worked throughout the year. Edward Jordan, a college student who, in 1855, spent 90 days in this service and who reported visiting 100 families, was the first colporter employed by the Middle District. In the 1858 Annual Meeting, it was reported that the State Board for this new type of evangelism had appointed John R. Bagby and John Sanderson to serve in the Middle District Association. Others who engaged in this ministry were W. R. Ford, H. G. Crews, Belfield Wells, M. W. Ford, A. E. Owen, H. C. Burnett and H. H. Hancock. Mr. Wells, who died in 1859, while engaged in this strenuous work, wrote as follows concerning one dramatic experience:

I have visited 46 grog shops and in every one I sold books. To the keeper of one of those establishments, I sold \$2.50 worth of books. I have visited a family within 100 yards of a Baptist church who had not heard a sermon for five years. . . . Many warned me against visiting a certain desperately wicked man, but I went and talked with him about Jesus, prayed with him, gave him tracts and left him weeping as though his heart would break. It is a hard work, but one in which great good may be effected.

As the churches increased, the Association departed from its doctrinal position that a minister should serve, as pastor, only one church. Fields of churches were formed and the pastor in such a "field" found himself traveling many hundreds of miles over bad roads in order to

care for his widely scattered congregations. At one time, the Manchester Church was the only one in the Association whose pastor gave his full time to one congregation. In 1860, there were only 19 ministers to serve the 31 churches in the Association. Bethel with Mt. Moriah, Chesterfield with Second Branch, Enon with Broadway (Prince George), Fine Creek with Muddy Creek, Petersville with Skinquarter, Gill's Grove with Mt. Olivet and Salem, Jerusalem with Liberty and Mt. Hermon, and Mt. Pleasant (Dinwiddie County) with Providence were the "fields" served, in 1860, by Pastors Crews, Belcher, Strachan, Tyree, Taylor, Winfree and Crowder. Other churches formed "fields" with churches in neighboring associations.

A "Central Committee" was appointed in 1852 to assist in forming fields and in supplying the destitute churches with ministerial aid. The Central Committee became in 1860, the Executive Board of the Association.

During these years of adjustment, the Association grew steadily not only in number of co-operating churches, in efficiency and in organization, but in vision. Editor William Sands of the **Religious Herald**, visited the 1852 annual meeting and published the following account of his journey:

The Association commenced its Annual Meeting on Saturday, July 31, and closed on Monday, August 2nd. The Danville Railroad running within two and one-half miles of the place of meeting, Spring Creek Church, Chesterfield County, we embraced the opportunity of breathing a little country air by attending. After a pleasant ride in the cars, we were met at Robious' Depot by Brother Robinson and conveyed first to his residence and from thence to the meeting-house.

No business was transacted previous to the introductory sermon. After partaking of refreshments, amply furnished by brethren in the neighborhood, the association was called to order by the Moderator, Brother John H. Steger. Two churches were received on application: Enon from the Portsmouth and Jerusalem, a newly constituted church. Letters from the churches were not of a cheering character, several of them complaining of a spiritual drouth. The additions by baptism were a little short of 200.

On Lord's-day, a large audience—we should judge from 1,800 to 2,000—were in attendance. A commodious arbour had been erected and three discourses were delivered . . . at the stand, with an intermission of one hour for refreshment.

In his report, Mr. Sands told with keen appreciation of the collection for missions which amounted to \$64.00. Ten dollars of this amount was applied to the fund being gathered for the salary of an associational missionary and \$54.00 was divided between the General Association and the Virginia Foreign Missionary Society. The Editor noted that on Monday sermons were delivered to the colored people who

gathered at Bethlehem. "It was to us," he concluded "a gratifying and interesting visit, though we were not so fortunate as to obtain even one new subscriber".

When the Middle District Association met in August, 1860, there were 31 churches, with a membership of 5,832, on the Associational roster. During a little more than two decades, the number of co-operating churches had been trebled and the membership had increased by almost that ratio.

Growth along other lines was indicated when, in 1844, the Association recommended to its churches the enlistment of every member in gifts to missions. It was stated in that year that, during the preceding associational period, contributions to general denominational causes totalled \$2,400. This may have been the banner year in Missionary giving. It was the last year of co-operation with the Triennial Convention. The Middle District "approved" the course pursued by the Virginia Foreign Missionary Society in withdrawing from the National Convention and in joining with other Southern States in organizing the Southern Baptist Convention. No other record of missionary contributions by the churches was recorded in the Minutes until 1869. We cannot, therefore, measure the degree of "approbation" with which the Association supported the missionary causes of the new Convention.

Strange as it may seem to us, the Middle District seems to have ignored the appointment, in 1849, as a missionary to China of Miss Harriet Baker, a member of Mt. Tabor Church. Miss Baker, the first single woman to receive appointment by the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board, went first to Canton, was transferred, in 1851, to Shanghai, and in 1853, because of ill health was ordered by her physician to return to America. There is an oblique recognition of this important event in the 1849 Minutes, when a resolution was adopted calling upon the churches to raise one-half of the salary of a foreign missionary. In that day and generation masculine dignity forbade the mention of a female. Another evidence of missionary stimulation was the recommendation, in 1850, that churches state in their letters contributions to "Foreign, State and Domestic Missions and to the Bible and Education Societies." Eight years later, as we have noted, the form for church letters was changed to include a section for this information.

The cause of temperance was presented with increasing vigor. In 1850, Rev. Gilbert Mason congratulated the Association and "the cause of humanity upon the decline in the use of ardent spirits throughout the bounds of the Association. I do not believe," he said, "that half the quantity is now used in this Association that was when I commenced my labors here".

Concern for spiritual growth in its membership was consistent. Days of thanksgiving "for the mercies of God", and days of humiliation, fasting and prayer "because of spiritual coldness which prevails", were recommended by the Association and observed by the churches. The observance of the Lord's Supper during Associational meetings was another measure adopted for the spiritual nurture of the constituency. This was one of the features of the Annual Meeting in 1847 and was declared to be "a time of refreshing from the presence of the Lord." For three years the Association continued this observance. In 1857, it was reinstated when the Fine Creek Church entertained the body and invited the delegates to join the church in this ordinance.

Preaching continued to be the principal feature of Annual Meetings. Church buildings, adequate to accommodate the delegates during business sessions, were totally inadequate for the throngs who gathered to hear the sermons. Entertaining churches erected an arbor adjacent to the church building. Congregations would assemble "at the stage" to hear sermons delivered by three or more of the ministers; the delegates would then return to the church building to attend to the business of the Association. In that day many judged good preaching according to the volume of sound which was generated. It was suggested in the 1848 Annual Meeting that the arbor be placed at some distance from the church building. Two services could, by this arrangement, be conducted at the same time.

These and other means of grace produced an abundant harvest. Perhaps the most convincing evidence is found in the attitude of the Association and of the churches toward the colored population in their midst. In spite of a growing prejudice against the Negro—a prejudice which was stimulated by activities of abolitionists from the North and West—the Middle District Association never wavered in her determination to win these people to Christ. In 1840, Mt. Hermon Church requested the Association to appoint a committee on "more efficient instruction of the colored people." Typical of the reports made each year by this Committee, was the following statement, approved by the Association in its 1846 meeting:

We can but deplore the great remissness that exists with masters on this subject. On the Baptists chiefly has God in his providence devolved the responsibility of attending to the religious interests of this class of our people. Should we prove unfaithful to this important trust?

The Committee affectionately recommend, first, to the ministers of this Association that they preach as often as they can exclusively to the colored people, and that their instruction be of the plainest kind.

Secondly, that heads of families use all persuasive and affectionate means to have their servants at family worship.

Almost every church in the Association reported colored members. Bethlehem, the name adopted in 1855 by the Spring Creek Church, must have been the most active congregation in this field. In one year Bethlehem reported 800 colored members and from its membership there went two all-Negro congregations. The Manchester African, constituted "in or about 1821" as a mission of Spring Creek Church, was admitted to the Association as an independent church in 1846. Until that year, Spring Creek continued its supervision over this congregation and its support of its activities. The Midlothian African Church was another group which sprang from Bethlehem.

Concerning the Midlothian African Baptist Church, the following news story appeared in the **Religious Herald**:

It will doubtless be gratifying to all classes of readers to learn that the slave population of Chesterfield County—and especially those of the Midlothian pits—are pressing forward in the work of their Lord and Saviour. The servants employed at the "pits" have a very handsome church, a much nicer one than several occupied by the white people in other parts of the country. They are very punctual in their attendance and extremely attentive to the sermons. By a requirement of the Midlothian Company, they are allowed one per cent of all the hard coal sold, which is placed in the treasury of the church to meet its expenses. The members of this church have the past year or two . . . held fairs, generally in the spring. The proceeds of these fairs, generally some hundred dollars, are placed in the treasury and so the church always has a small available sum on hand.

At the conclusion of the Fair held on Whit-sunday of 1860, one of the brethren made a speech. He told the history of the Negroes at the pits previous to the establishment of the church; spoke of the crimes and depredations they then committed, said that the neighbors were unable to raise their cattle and poultry on account of the prowling thieves from the Pits; contrasted their present high-toned position with those dark days and concluded by invoking his fellow-servants not to be insensible to the privileges by which, in the Providence of God, they are now surrounded.

Church discipline had not yet become obsolete. In answer to a query sent in by one of the churches the Association declared:

That in the opinion of this Association, the habit among some of the members of our churches of attending circuses and other popular amusements is in direct violation of the spirit of the New Testament and wholly incompatible with the Christian character.

A new Constitution was adopted by the Association in 1843 and the Rules of Decorum which had been adopted in 1784 and which had been discovered by Rev. Benjamin Watkins in 1798, were frequently revised.

In 1858, the clerk was instructed to "obtain" copies of each year's Minutes since the organization of the Association and have them bound

into one or more volumes. When the Association met in 1859, the clerk presented to the body a bound volume of Minutes containing the records of 50 sessions. At this time the Moderator of the Association, William Pope Dabney, presented to the Association a Volume containing the **Legislative Guide**, in which was printed also **Jefferson's Manual**, with the request that this book "should be preserved and handed down to his successors in office for their use". As the Association approached its 175th birthday, that book, preserved by Rev. D. B. Winfree, and presented to his great granddaughter, will be one of the exhibits in the anniversary celebration.

The term of moderators was limited, in 1845, to one year. This limitation, however, which had rarely been observed, was omitted from the Rules when, in 1852, they were revised.

In almost every session of the Association from 1848 to 1860, one or more churches applied for admission into the Association. Five of these applications came from the churches which had withdrawn from the Middle District to form the Zoar Association. In 1844, Salem returned to the fold; five years later, Sandy Creek and Skinquarter were admitted, and in 1855, "Chesterfield Church, worshipping in Rehoboth meeting-house," applied for admission. Second Branch, returning in 1856, was the last of the seceding churches to join their former co-laborers, Zoar having dissolved her constitution as a church in or about 1844. The Old Fashioned Baptist Association did not prove to be a successful venture.

Not many of the delegates who attended the 1860 meeting of the Association were fully aware of the cloud which cast its shadow across the nation. In that meeting, financial provision was made to secure two colporters and one missionary to work within the Association and one missionary who would labor somewhere in Western Virginia. Dr. John A. Broadus spoke for the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Greenville, South Carolina, and took a collection for that institution amounting to \$305. The churches were asked to take measures to raise the sum of \$1,000 for the support of a missionary family under the direction of the Foreign Mission Board. A strong resolution concerning more consistent instruction of the colored people indicates the temper of the Association in this critical period of national tension.

In a meeting of the Powhatan and Red Lane churches, held in September, 1860, a resolution calling upon the churches to provide a permanent fund of \$10,000 for the support of "superannuated, afflicted or worn down Baptist ministers connected with the Middle District Association and for the aid of such churches connected with the said Association as may be unable, without assistance, to procure ministerial service" was adopted.

The death of John H. Steger, a contemporary of Benjamin Watkins, Edward Baptist and the venerable Eleazer Clay, was the only reminder, in 1860, of the years of struggle between isolationists and co-operationists. The Middle Association had "redeemed the time" which had been lost in compromise and contention.

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THE HISTORY OF THE
CHAPTER V
FORTITUDE AND FAITH
1861-1883

We would not have you give or do or pray less for our afflicted country. We urge to increased prayerfulness and effort in this great cause. But, dear brethren, while you have been doing thus nobly for our country, you have neglected our beloved Zion. Your letters furnish mournful evidence that never within our memory was the cause of Christ languishing as it now is. Some say that they have no Sabbath School, in consequence of the War; others could not have a meeting of their churches to appoint delegates to our Association; others have suspended their pastor, with the plea that they are unable to support him. Nearly all the weekly prayer meetings have gone down. We hear of no protracted meetings for the conversion of souls. During the year there have not been as many additions among the whites as there have been deaths. . . . There is not a church in our number that has not the members and means enough to carry on the interests of Zion. If the young men are in the army, where are the fathers, mothers and maidens? . . . By continuing thus to neglect the dear churches, of which you are members, you will most likely provoke God to abandon both our Confederacy and our Zion. . . . Our independence and nationality would ultimately be worth little without the leavening power of flourishing churches. By the love then that you bear to your country, your Saviour and the souls of men, be admonished to pray and toil and give for the church of which you are a member. —

From the Report of Committee "On the Duties of Christians in the Struggle the Southern States are now Making for Their Independence," adopted in July, 1862, by the Middle District Association.

War! Occupation! Reconstruction! Perseverence!—those are the captions under which the history of the Middle District Association for this period might well be written. The progressive plans which had been launched by the Association in the Annual Meeting, held in the summer of 1860, and by its Executive Board, meeting in February, 1861, were cancelled by War. Seven of the thirty-one churches failed to send to the Annual Meeting which was convened on July 31,

1861, either letters or delegates. Fourteen of the twenty-four churches represented in that meeting reported Sunday schools. "The officers of the Association being absent in the army, the body proceeded to the election of new officers," the clerk recorded without further comment. The moderator in 1860, William Pope Dabney, returned to serve the Association again, but the clerk, Horace Hancock, gave his life in the service of his State.

There were generous public offerings for foreign missions and for the publication and circulation among the soldiers in the Confederate armies of tracts and Testaments. The hour from eleven to twelve in each day's session was devoted to prayer for God's blessings "on our army", and the churches were requested to hold weekly prayer meetings "for their own prosperity, for the cause of Christ in general and for the success of our national cause". There was a note of chagrin over the sharp increase in intemperance. The Committee on Temperance stated:

Perhaps there was never a period in the history of this reformation so gloomy and unpropitious as the present. It seems almost to be forgotten amidst the stirring scenes through which we are now passing.

The committee recommended that the churches return to the old total abstinence pledge and urged that women and children, as well as men and colored people, be enlisted under its banner.

Army colportage, observance of seasons of fasting and prayer, special efforts for the salvation of sinners, warnings of the "desolating tides of intemperance" which were affecting every community, concern for the success of the recently established Sabbath School Board of the Confederate States, a more adequate support by the churches of their pastors—these were the practical measures considered by the Middle District Association during the four years of war.

One "field" of churches took seriously associational admonitions concerning the support of faithful pastors. In May, 1863, there appeared in the **Religious Herald** a note of appreciation from the pastor of the field composed of Branch's, Tomahawk and Mt. Moriah. He had received from the ladies of those congregations \$180 in Confederate currency, the price at that time of a suit of clothes.

Concerning the Annual Meeting held during the summer of 1863, to which about half of the churches sent delegates, the clerk wrote with some acerbity:

Several good sermons were preached and the business was conducted with much harmony, but, owing to the anxiety of some of our leading delegates to get through the business in two days, there was wanting much of the decorum and dignity that formerly have characterized the meetings of the Association.

The brethren took the time, however, to draft and adopt during that meeting a series of resolutions which blended bitterness and humility with a plea for the spirit of forgiveness. In those resolutions the association declared:

1. That in the unholy war which has been forced upon us by the fanatical and aggressive spirit of the North and now being waged against these Southern States with such savage cruelty, every consideration of interest and honor urges us to resist the yoke of despotism which our enemies are striving to impose upon us to the last extremity.

2. That to this end we tender to the Government of the Confederate States our earnest support in every measure necessary to conduct this war to an honorable and successful issue.

3. That we gratefully acknowledge the goodness of God in giving to our Confederacy such wise civil and military leaders, in crowning our arms with such signal success, in giving rain from heaven and fruitful seasons, filling our barns with plenty and our hearts with gladness.

4. That we recognize in this destructive war the chastening hand of the Lord on account of our national sins; that we humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God, cherishing a spirit of forgiveness towards our enemies and a lively sense of our dependence upon Almighty God for success and fervently pray that these troubles may be speedily terminated in an honorable and permanent peace.

Time was given also to a collection for the Sunday School Board of the Convention and to a resolution urging the churches to raise an amount necessary to support four colporters in the Confederate Army.

When the Middle District met in August, 1864, 15 churches were represented. Enon and Broadway were behind the Federal lines. During that meeting, collections were taken for the Sunday School Board of the Southern Baptist Convention, for the General Association Colportage Board and for the education of orphaned children of Confederate soldiers. To this last named fund, the Middle District contributed \$860. Moderator David B. Winfree challenged the congregation to a supreme effort in behalf of these orphans, when, during the meeting, he said to the agent of the General Association: "Select one of those children and I will raise it, providing for it . . . just as I would for my own child". In March, 1865, a lady, identified as "Miss N. A. G., Chesterfield County", stated in the **Religious Herald**:

I have found some 30 children whom I have arranged to send to school and am anxious to arrange for many others. I have \$200 on hand that has been given me for this purpose. I am not begging generally, but rather think that I will commence doing so when this miserable weather clears up.

Above the crash of cannon fire, which sounded more and more clearly as the Federal Army moved relentlessly toward Richmond, even above the cry of helpless orphaned children, the call of the Great Commission was heard by delegates who attended the 1864 Annual Meeting of the Middle District Association. Perhaps no one action of the body during the War years reveals more clearly the faith and fortitude of its members than the following resolution adopted during the 1864 associational gathering:

That the crisis in our national affairs, which justly claims so much of our attention, (the Association stated) is no excuse for failure to afford our brethren, whom we have sent far hence to the heathen, our warm sympathies, fervent prayers and liberal support. We earnestly recommend this matter to the churches.

As the armies of Grant closed in on Richmond, the **Religious Herald** reported a revival of religion in the community of Salem Church in Chesterfield County.

Amid scenes of active military operations, (the Editor of the **Herald** stated) . . . the members of Salem Church are intent upon maintaining their regular services and enjoying the ordinances of the Lord's House. Deprived of their Pastor, Rev. William Young, they called Elder J. A. Strachan, who had recently been driven from his home at Bermuda Hundred. Between 40 and 50 persons have been baptized. Some of the soldiers from camps nearby have been drawn into this meeting.

The 82nd Annual Meeting of the Association was held four months after the evacuation of Richmond by the Confederate government and armies and during the occupation by Federal soldiers of Virginia's capital and counties. Twenty-three churches were represented in this meeting by letters or delegates. Sunday schools were reported in Bethel, Bethlehem, Mt. Hermon, Manchester, Skinquarter, Salem, Mt. Moriah and Peterville churches. Apathy among their members was mourned by a number of the churches and once-a-month preaching was reported by the majority. The weekly prayer meeting which the Skinquarter Church had kept up for the past four years; increase of strength because of the return of members from the army to the Fine Creek Church; the gracious outpouring of God's Spirit upon the Salem Church, resulting in the conversion of about 50 souls; every-Sabbath preaching reported by Salem and an optimistic letter received by the Association from the Manchester Church were accepted as tokens of Divine favor. Enon and Broadway churches reported that their houses of worship had been totally destroyed and their members were widely scattered. Revivals during the War years, resulting in 378 baptisms in 1862 and 245 reported to the Association

in its 1863 meeting, had been confined to a small area of the territory. In 1865, eleven churches reported an increase in membership, compared with their reports in 1861; twelve reported fewer members, and eight churches did not bother to change their membership rolls. When, in 1867, more realistic reports were secured, the Association registered a net loss during the war period of 16 white members.

The relationship between the churches and their colored members was one of the important questions which, in 1865, faced the Association. It was the unanimous opinion of the brethren present that "the dissolution of the relation between our people and their servants has not lessened our obligation for the religious instruction of the colored people." The Manchester African Church was requested to remain within the Middle District Association, but was told that the church must be represented in that body by white delegates. The Midlothian African Church was assured of its **right** to hold meetings without the supervision of white persons, but that the church would promote good feelings on both sides if, as often as possible, the presence of white brethren were secured. "Habitual cultivation of kind feelings and humane conduct toward the colored race" was the general recommendation sent to the churches.

Pastoral support was a serious problem. Churches were advised by the Association, if United States currency was not available, to remunerate their pastors, as far as necessary, by "the products of their various branches of industry." Mobilization for the ministry and ministerial education were presented through a resolution, drafted by Dr. Robert Ryland, President of Richmond College. Dr. Ryland suggested: "As the young men whom God calls to the ministry are always modest and usually poor, we urge the churches to seek out such, foster their gifts and aid them, if need be, in procuring an education." Strong resolution were adopted condemning the use of intoxicating liquors. A charming note was introduced into the meeting when Elder Bland suggested that, since the arbor had been rendered "unfit for the accommodation of ladies, in consequence of a heavy fall of rain, that the delegates repair thither for the transaction of business, that the congregation might have the privilege of hearing Dr. Robert Ryland preach in the house.

Fortitude in the time of national disaster; faith that Almighty God would guide his people in building once more the walls around Zion; practical common sense in the midst of material bankruptcy; generosity and gallantry were eloquent evidences of the spirit which dominated the leaders of Middle District Association in its first post war meeting.

The Manchester and Midlothian African churches withdrew from the Middle District to unite with Shiloh, the mother of Negro Baptist Associations in Virginia. The colored members withdrew from other churches to form churches of their own race. Broadway, in Prince George, and Mt. Calvary, in Chesterfield County, were war casualties. In 1867, those churches were dropped from the rolls of the Association. Liberty, in Powhatan County, although it struggled on until 1875, never recovered from injuries inflicted by the War. Continued emphasis on total abstinence and disagreement with the rulings of the Association concerning Scriptural authority for lawsuits between Christians, holding of fairs and festivals to raise money for the support of churches and other controversial matters resulted, in 1866, in the permanent separation from the Association of old Chesterfield Church. In 1880, Mt. Olivet and Mt. Tabor were disbanded.

With commendable patience and persistence, the Middle District Association continued her emphasis on total abstinence, more efficient Sunday schools and the employment by the churches of more systematic financial methods. The first Associational Sunday school Convention was held in March, 1869, and financial tables were included, for the first time, in the Minutes of that year's associational meeting.

An interesting question was raised, in 1870, by B. A. Hancock, when he said:

There are 5,000 colored children in the boundaries of this Association. No efforts have been made to organize them into Sunday schools. Where is the Scripture that releases us from this responsibility? There is none. But public opinion is against it. Will this be a good plea at the bar of heaven? Jesus was not guided by it when he died upon the cross; Paul did not consult it when he was sent to preach the Gospel to the Gentiles; Luther did not fear it when he denounced the crimes of Popery, and shall we be less bold or less faithful than they?

The response of the Association to this challenge was the appointment of a committee to confer with Dr. Thomas Sydnor, Agent of the American Baptist Publication Society. Dr. Sydnor was urged to begin the work of constituting within the Associational Sunday schools for colored children and the churches of the Middle District were asked to assist him in this work.

No record appears in the Minutes of the Middle District Association of one of the most important events in its history, viz., the appointment, in 1871, as a missionary to Burma of Miss Kate F. Evans, "native of Painsville, Amelia County." There have been Evans in Amelia since the constitution of that county, but we are not told to which branch of that family Kate belonged. We know very little of her early years. She was born in 1842 and enjoyed better educational ad-

vantages than were given to the majority of Virginia girls in the pre-war period. We are told that she was "whole-hearted and consecrated, with a touch of humor which brightened all her reports and home letters." Her mother had awakened and nourished in this young woman's heart a love for the cause of foreign missions. Whether her special interest in Burma had been aroused by reading the biography of Ann Hasseltine Judson or by appeals and articles published in the **American Baptist Missionary Magazine**, we do not know. When she was 24 years of age she began "knocking on the door" of the American Baptist Foreign Mission Society, asking for appointment to Burma. It was the policy of that Society to appoint only married women, but her persistence as well as her preparation and personality must have made a favorable impression on the officers of the Society. On April 3, 1871, the Women's American Baptist Foreign Mission Society was organized. The first missionary appointed by that society was Kate Evans. She sailed from Boston in December, 1871. "I have never been happier in my life," she wrote from London.

Upon her arrival in Burma, Miss Evans was assigned to Thongze, a mission station without a Railroad, Post Office or bazaar (market). One missionary, a widow, Mrs. M. B. Ingalls, was her co-worker. In that station these two women labored alone until Mrs. Ingalls' death in September, 1902. The tribute published at that time by the American Baptist Society applies to the service of Miss Evans as well as to her companion. The editor of the American Baptist magazine wrote:

She saw the facilities of travel advanced from a crude jungle cart to a railroad, of which Thongze became a station, shortening the journey to Rangoon from several days to one of a few hours. And above all she saw the people . . . develop a sincere respect for the religion which she represented. She was permitted to witness the conversion of hundreds from heathenism to a rejoicing belief in the Saviour of the world, and to see the establishment of Christian schools and churches until Thongze became one of the most successful mission stations among the Burmese people.

For nine years following Mrs. Ingalls' death, Miss Evans lived in the Rangoon Guest House. Translation and creative writing were the assignments given her by the Board and she prepared a series of Children's Bible story books which were used to good advantage. In January, 1911, while attending a service in one of the schools, she was paralyzed. In the home of one of the Rangoon missionaries she received loving care until 1918, when death released her from her helpless body.

When, in 1873, the Rules of Decorum were revised, Mell's **Parliamentary Practice** was substituted for **Jefferson's Manuel** as the authority in parliamentary rulings.

Letters sent by the churches to the 1874 meeting "exhibited a year of almost universal dearth." Of the 28 churches in the fellowship of the Middle District, 13 were without pastors. In that year, Rev. R. W. Cridlin was elected as missionary. At the end of the next associational year, only five churches were without a pastor and two of the five were being supplied by the missionary or by another minister. All but Mt. Tabor and Branch's churches reported a Sunday school. Mt. Calvary and Bethlehem led in this good work by maintaining a school for their own membership and a mission school in the communities adjacent to their buildings. Mr. Cridlin concluded on November 1, 1875, his services as missionary of the Association.

The foreign mission enterprise received a tremendous impetus in 1874, when Rev. W. J. David, of Mississippi, visited the Middle District, which met that year with the Bethlehem Church. Mr. David, who had served in the Nigerian Mission before the War, had been selected by the Foreign Mission Board to be the first white missionary to return to Africa following the War. During his visit to the Middle District Association, the bachelor missionary met the eldest daughter of the pastor of Bethlehem, who was also the moderator of the Association. Soon after her conversion, Nannie Bland had felt the call to serve in some non-Christian land, but had been prevented from carrying out that desire because the Foreign Mission Board did not, at that time, appoint single women missionaries. When Mr. David left Virginia for Nigeria, he took with him Miss Bland's promise to marry him when he returned to America on furlough. This revival of interest in foreign missions brought forth, in 1876 meeting of the Association, two important resolutions. The first was the admonition to the "sisters of our churches to form missionary societies, auxiliary to the Woman's Mite Society of Richmond," and the other suggested a revision of the Constitution, striking out the provision that "refusal to aid the benevolent institution of the age" should not be made a test of fellowship. The first proposal received unanimous approval; only four delegates voted against the Constitutional revision.

The Minutes of the Association do not record the appointment, in 1879, of Nannie Bland David as a missionary to Central Africa, but that event stimulated the Association to increased liberality. A young brother, registered as a delegate from the Skinquarter Church—by name, A. Bartow Rudd—presented in the 1881 meeting a stirring report on foreign missions. In the next meeting of the Association another brother declared that he was determined to "kill the demon of stinginess in my heart if it takes every ham in my smokehouse to do it." After almost seven years of fruitful, sacrificial service in Lagos, West Africa", Nannie Bland David died at sea. Her dying words to her

husband, "Never give up Africa," have been a challenge to two generations of Southern Baptist young people.

Meeting in 1882, the Association was reminded that the next year marked its 100th birthday. "There is something of unearthly beauty in the harmony and kindness of spirit existing in this Association", a former member of the body wrote concerning the 99th anniversary. "The preachers and laymen," he continued, "seem linked together in spiritual affection and every session seems to be a joyful jubilee".

Twenty-four of the 25 churches were represented by letters and delegates and one by letter only when, on August 8, 1883, the Middle District Association gathered at Mt. Hermon Church for its Centennial session. The meeting was called to order by Beverly Augustus Hancock; Dr. J. L. Dorset was re-elected the clerk. Only one note of sorrow was heard during the meeting and that was one of tender affection for the former moderator, Captain David M. Goode, who was called to his heavenly home ten days after the Association was convened. Mt. Hermon had spent \$650 in improving her building and grounds. The suggestion that, in the future, the Association hold only one session a day "in order to relieve the tremendous expense incident to the entertainment of the body" was rejected by a large majority. Sabbath School Missionary Societies were reported in several churches and recommended by the Association to all of the churches. Highlights of the Centennial were the "discourses" by Dr. J. L. M. Curry, of Richmond College, and Rev. Luther W. Moore. Mr. Moore's "Historical Discourse", expanded to include brief biographies of the pastors who had served the Association since its organization and sketches of the church which were at that time members of the Middle District, was published, in 1887, under the title, "The History of the Middle District Association".

When, in 1861, the War disrupted the normal life of the nation, there were in the Middle District Association 31 churches with a membership of 2,241 white and 3,619 colored persons. In the Centennial year of 1883, there were 25 churches, with 2,538 white members. Arbor, constituted in 1881, largely from members who came from the extinct Mt. Tabor Church, and Clopton Street, constituted in 1881 through the efforts of the Manchester Baptist Church, had been added to the rolls during the post war period. In his Historical Discourse, Mr. Moore reminded the Association of all the way that the Lord God had led the churches. Warning of weaknesses and dangers, the great-hearted leader closed his centennial story with the following plea:

Brethren of the Middle District Association, let this day mark an era in our history. Let us here and now receive an inspiration that shall urge us forward in the great and glorious

work before us. Let us quit ourselves like men. Let us be faithful unto death. Let us emulate the examples of the great and good men who have preceded us, that our reward may be like theirs.

THE HISTORY OF THE

CHAPTER VI

THE CHALLENGE OF A NEW ERA

1884-1933

There is a condition developing very rapidly in our Association which we must meet at once. A great many strangers are coming into our midst, buying farms and locating permanently, taking the places of native born citizens and some of our best church workers who are moving away. We find very few of these new-comers inclined to attend church worship and we feel that the attention of our brethren should be especially directed towards these new settlers. —

Report of the Executive Board to the Middle District Association in its 124th Annual Meeting, held in August, 1907.

The last two decades of the nineteenth century marked the beginning of an industrial era which was to revolutionize the social and religious life of Virginia and of the nation. Young people—sometimes entire families—moved from rural communities to take advantage of the regular incomes guaranteed by the new industrial economy. The country churches, robbed of many efficient leaders, were not too persistent in their efforts to enlist the strangers who rented or bought estates which had been owned for generations by “County” families. Attached to the older churches by the ties of sentiment and loyalty, many of these absentee Baptists failed to connect themselves with the city churches and were lost to the denomination.

Although the Association entered its second century “with high and noble aspirations and with the determination to make yet greater achievements in the future”, net gains in membership were small and the number of ordained and “settled” pastors declined from seventeen in 1884, to six in 1889. Churches whose selfishness had been nourished by the unselfishness of ministers who demanded too little for themselves and their families, were unwilling—sometimes unable—to pay their pastors a living wage. The average annual salary of Middle District pastors, in 1884, was \$145. Six students for the ministry were enrolled in College and Seminary, one-half of them from Mt. Moriah Church. This, however, was the largest number reported to the Association for several decades.

A criticism must have been levelled by some brother at “higher education”, for in one associational meeting Dr. William E. Hatcher

is credited with the caustic reminder: "That the College never diminished the amount of brains possessed by any young man while a student there, but" he added, "the power of dis-enfooling a student was never conferred upon any College".

In 1888, A. Bartow Rudd, of Skinquarter Church, who had spent College and Seminary vacations in ministering to Arbor and Mt. Hope churches and to other sections of the Association, was commissioned by the Foreign Mission Board as a missionary to Mexico. Two years later, the Association was thrilled to receive from its missionary son an affectionate letter, telling them of the three churches which had been organized on his field since his arrival in Mexico, challenging the churches to more fervent prayer and more liberal giving, and pleading with the young people of the Association to consider seriously the foreign mission call. When Mr. Rudd came to the United States on his first furlough, the Middle District welcomed him home by launching a \$500 Rudd Memorial Chapel Fund.

An amusing incident occurred in the 1890 Annual Meeting, when the Association voted to hold only one session each day, eliminating "dinner on the grounds". "It is too great a burden on the community where our meetings are held", the committee argued, "and also inconsistent with the very purposes for which we are organized, to provide a great feast for a surging, overwhelming, uncontrollable multitude". The brethren, however, had acted without consulting those on whom the burden of entertainment fell most heavily—the ladies of the Association. When, during the next August, the "multitude" gathered at Red Lane Church, the ladies spread for them such sumptuous feasts that the brethren meekly decided that: "In the future, the church entertaining the Association shall determine the manner of entertainment." In 1894, the churches were divided into four groups and the Association was entertained, in turn, by each group.

A decline in attendance upon the Association and a slackening of interest in its proceedings precipitated the following resolution:

That this Association recommend to the churches the importance of electing such delegates to this body as will be likely to attend, and that the churches insist upon their delegates remaining in the house during the sessions of this body and until the close of the sessions.

The clerk was instructed, in 1895, to print a new and much expanded form on which the churches would report to the Association. The following items were added:

Number of prayer meetings; number of prayer meetings held in families; number of families who have regular family worship; number of members who work in Sunday school; number of members who lead in public prayer; number of

members who make public exhortations; number of members who do not contribute to the pastor's salary; number of members who do not contribute to the Boards of our Association; and these questions: Are public collections for missions taken up every preaching service? Are addresses made by your pastor to the Sunday school? Does your pastor make special appeals for each Board of our Association? Have you Young Men's Prayer Meetings? Have you a Woman's Missionary Society? Have you a Sunbeam Society? What is your plan for raising money for the Boards of our Association?

Alas! few of the churches took time to answer those stimulating questions and, in 1911, the Middle District adopted the simpler form which was recommended by the Baptist General Association of Virginia.

Changed in many ways, the Middle District had not lost her conviction in the essential rightness of complete separation of Church and State. In 1901, the Association adopted a petition to the Virginia Constitutional Convention "now in session", protesting the use of public funds for sectarian institutions and asking: "That the new Constitution incorporate a section prohibiting the State and cities or other political sub-divisions of the State from appropriating funds to any institution wholly or partially under sectarian control". In 1925, the Association reaffirmed the historic opposition of Virginia Baptists to any "meddling by the State in matters concerning religion," when the delegates passed a resolution in opposition to the Bill before the Virginia Assembly which would have required that the Bible be read in every public school in Virginia.

The first night session of the Association was held in 1911. Highlights of that session were a memorial to John Weatherford, an address on the Baptist World Alliance delivered by one of its principal founders, Dr. R. H. Pitt, and a message on missionary work in Puerto Rico by Dr. Bartow Rudd, at that time a missionary of the American Baptist Foreign Mission Society. Dr. Rudd, for 16 years a missionary of the Southern Baptist Board in Mexico, had baptized the first Puerto Rican convert to Baptist principles.

To the campaign for "A Greater Richmond College," the Association rallied with characteristic fervor. By the year 1913, all but \$1,500 of the \$4,734 which had been subscribed by the churches to that fund, had been paid.

In the Annual Meeting held in the summer of 1913, there were many reminders of the past. Letters were read from Rev. John R. Bagby, too feeble to attend the meeting, and from Historian Luther W. Moore, at that time living with his son in Louisiana. Tributes were paid to three beloved leaders of the past who had died during the preceding year—William E. Hatcher, John E. Davidson and R. W. Cridlin.

An amusing incident occurred when the roll call of delegates appointed by the churches to the 1916 Annual Meeting of the Association "developed one woman delegate present." The Constitution did not limit the churches to the appointment of male delegate, nor did the Rules of Order contain such a limitation. Custom was the law governing the sex of delegates. "After discussion," we are told, "on motion of Rev. J. W. Kincheloe, it was ordered that this delegate be recognized, and the matter of the churches electing women as delegates in the future be referred to the Executive Committee."

The clerk failed to record the recommendation of the Executive Committee on this baffling point of law and order. When on the next morning the roll call of delegates was continued, the report of the Committee on Digest of Church Letters was adopted without discussion. Weatherford Memorial Church in South Richmond was the pioneer in this departure from established custom and two ladies are listed in the roster of delegates accepted, in 1916, from that church. No ladies were included in the list of delegates to the 1917 Annual Meeting, but in the Woman's Missionary Union meeting for 1917, this matter was discussed and after emphasis upon "the danger of decreasing the male attendance at the Association if women were sent as delegates instead of men," Woman's Missionary Union voted that "the following clause be stricken from the Minutes:

"Resolved, That any church in our Association so desiring may send one woman delegate to the Association, and the delegate to be duly recognized by the body."

Skinquarter and the Midlothian Mission were the next to take advantage of the privilege of appointing women delegates and after 1919, there seems to have been no question concerning the appointment of ladies as delegates to the Association.

The 75 Million Campaign "started slow" in the Middle District. The General Association requested the Association to give, during the five-year period of this Campaign, \$239,125.94. In accepting its apportionment, Middle District cut a round hundred thousand from that goal. The churches actually subscribed \$181,159.95. At the close of 1924, it was announced that \$134,239.35 of the amount pledged had been paid. When we consider that, in spite of the larger salaries paid to the pastors of the six city churches, the average salary of Middle District pastors was, in 1920, only \$1,084.40, the amount pledged to and contributed through 75 Million Campaign channels represented a victory for the cause of missions.

As the twentieth century emerged, a new organization claimed the attention of Virginia Baptist churches. Slowly, accepted by the churches of the Middle District with many misgivings, the Baptist Young People's Union began to make its way into the life of the

Association. "How To Train Our Young Members for Church and Other Religious Work" was the lengthy title of a new committee which reported to the Middle District in its 1893 meeting. Two years later, the chairman of that committee, none other than the Honorable J. B. Watkins, grandson of Rev. Benjamin Watkins, incorporated in his report the following suggestion:

The great desire of our churches for the better training of young Christians for religious work has, in the last few years, called into existence the Baptist Young People's Union, which organization has for its object this very work. Perhaps, in no other way can all members of our churches be brought to take a greater personal interest in their work. There are great possibilities for our young people through these organizations, and we hope the day is not distant when each church in this Association shall have a live and active organization of young people. Then will we hope to see a more pious and consecrated people obeying God and speaking often one to another of His great mercies towards us.

Two years later, the Committee earnestly requested the churches to give attention to the Baptist Young People's Union "as a means of developing our young members for church and other religious work". From 1895 to 1905, this organization was ignored, so far as the Middle District records are concerned and then the Committee on How to Train Our Young Members for Church and Other Religious work suggested that the churches organize Baptist Young People's Union or Sunbeams Bands, or both". The caution with which the churches approached this organization may have been interpreted by Miss F. Estelle Rudd who, in 1900, prepared the report of the committee. That report—read, of course, by a male member of the body—suggested that: "the little ones be urged to join the Baby Mission Bands and that boys and girls be encouraged to attend the prayer meetings and take part in them, **when they are held separately**". Be it said for the Middle District that, although the Association called upon its ladies to prepare its reports, to serve the "dinner on the grounds" when the body held its annual sessions, although the brethren gave their hearty official sanction to the organization of Woman's Missionary Societies and Sunbeam Bands, this District was not the first to encourage the female members to speak in "mixed assemblies".

In 1909, the Committee found courage enough to recommend, without apology, the organization of B.Y.P.U.'s, and, in 1912, the Committee reporting on the State of the Churches noted that there were in the Association seven such Unions, one of them having received, in 1911, recognition as an A-1 organization. In that session, however, the Committee on How to Train Young Members recommended the Young Men's Prayer Meeting, the Sunday school and the Young Men's

Christian Association, with no mention of the B.Y.P.U. Not until 1926 did the Middle District accept the Baptist Young People's Union as a part of its program, and include in its Minutes statistics concerning its development.

As the Middle District Association approached her 150th anniversary, a serious financial depression held the nation in its grip. It would be a long time before the churches reached again heights gained in 1925, when the 38 churches reported a membership of 8,434, a Sunday school in every church and contributions of more than \$100,000 for home purposes and \$22,354 for causes beyond the associational boundaries. The climax of the 1925 meeting was the dedication of a monument of Chesterfield granite which had been placed in Chesterfield Courthouse Square. The plan to erect this monument was launched in the 1922 meeting of the Association and carried through to successful completion largely through the efforts of Dr. R. T. Marsh. More than the \$750 requested for this purpose was given by the churches. Tender memories of bygone years were evoked, especially by a letter from Dr. J. Ernest Cook, Executive Secretary of the Baptist Council of Richmond, enclosing ten dollars toward the Monument Fund. Dr. Cook wrote:

Besides my interest as a Baptist, I have a personal and family interest in helping to rear this monument. My mother was Susan Goode Farmer. Her great-grandfather was John Goode, the first settled pastor of Skinquarter Church, where he died in the pastorate on June 12, 1790.

John Goode became a Baptist in this wise. In his early youth, he lost respect for the Established Church, having been fined in Henrico County for fox hunting on Sunday and failure to support the church. He moved to Chesterfield, married Sarah Brown and settled near Skinquarter Springs. When Baptist preachers were imprisoned for preaching the Gospel, a fellow feeling and curiosity took him to the Courthouse to hear them preach. He fell under conviction; was baptized and later ordained by William Hickman. Since John Goode, there have been nothing but Baptists in my mother's family.

Dr. Douglas Southall Freeman delivered the Historical Address on the afternoon of the dedication of the monument, which stands "on the spot where stood the old County jail in which seven Baptist ministers were imprisoned during the years 1770-1774."

Every church was represented when the Middle District met on July 11, 1933, in Weatherford Memorial Baptist Church, South Richmond, for its Sesqui-Centennial sessions. Ten persons stood when Moderator William C. Shawen recognized those who had attended the Centennial Meeting of 1883. The veterans were: George Swann,

Fred Moore, Mr. and Mrs. J. T. Bass, J. A. Stratton, A. H. Goode, A. B. Rudd, Mrs. R. H. Bruce, Mrs. Annie Woolridge and Mrs. C. O. Cheatham.

Dr. Garnett Ryland, Secretary of the Virginia Baptist Historical Society, delivered the Historical Discourse which traced the development of the Association under the following captions: "The First Meetings", "Intensive Cultivation", "The Early Leaders", "Stagnation and Awakening", "Harmony and Expansion", "The War and the Centennial", "The Last Half-Century". A pageant, written and directed by Mrs. J. E. Norvell, and presented by the young people of Weatherford Memorial Baptist Church, pictured vividly highlights in the history of the Association.

If progress during the half-century period which closed with the Sesqui-Centennial meeting seemed to be slow, sometimes non-existent, a review at ten-year intervals will prove stimulating. Here are the figures:

Year	Number of Pastors	Number of Churches	Membership	Contributions to Boards of Association	Paid to Pastors in Association
1883	11	25	2,548	\$ 750	\$ 3,547
1893	12	26	2,213	1,600	4,805
1903	14	29	3,281	1,630	6,662
1913	16	35	4,554	3,958	10,827
1923	20	38	6,555	20,950	27,498
1933	20	37	8,463	13,518	28,000

Three human factors operated most successfully in the growth and expansion of the Association. We mention first a nucleus of ministerial strength which has not been exceeded in ability or in dedication. Sons of outstanding talent had succeeded their ministerial fathers as pastors of several rural churches, notably Robert Winfree and J. W. Reynolds. These men declined flattering calls to city churches to remain with their rural congregations. Other men of superior ability gave to the churches a leadership which combined scholarship with a tenderness for their flocks which endeared them to the communities as well as to the churches they served. A number of the churches employed ministerial students from Richmond College and while "supplies" from the College did not build up the churches as a resident minister might have done, the churches served as a proving ground for many talented young preachers.

The second factor which explains the survival of the rural churches during this period was the faithfulness and versatility of the Executive Board of the Association. Year after year, this Board devised

new plans and programs by which they hoped to arouse the churches to greater effort. A tent was purchased and offered to churches which desired to use that method of evangelism. Executive Board meetings were held in weak churches. More compact "fields," with "settled" pastors living in homes provided by their congregations, homes which were located in the center of each field of churches, was for many years the slogan of the Executive Board. The duplex envelope system, the every member canvass, increase in salaries of pastors, every Sunday worship services, evergreen Sunday schools—these were the persistent recommendations to the churches by this Board. Few laymen have served the denomination so long and so well as Dr. J. G. Loving, a member of this Board for many years. His name appeared first in the Minutes of the Middle District Association as a delegate from Clopton Street Church in South Richmond. He was a constituent member of Weatherford Memorial Baptist Church, moderator of the Association for nine years and clerk of that body for five years. As examining physician for the Foreign Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention and as a member of the Board of Missions and Education of the General Association of Virginia for many years, Dr. Lovings' service to Virginia and Southern Baptists has been distinguished by unusual devotion to the cause at home and abroad.

The third factor in the continuing development in missionary interest of the Middle District Association and of its churches was the Woman's Missionary Union. The story of that organization will be told in the next Chapter.

True conservatism (Tryon Edwards once wrote) is substantial progress; it holds fast what is true and good in order to advance in both. To cast away the old is not of necessity to obtain the new. To reject anything that is valuable, lessens the power of gaining more. That a thing is new does not of course commend; that it is old does not discredit. The test question is, "Is it true or good?"

Judged by this test, the Middle District Association made substantial progress during the half-century which divided its Centennial anniversary from its Sesqui-Centennial.

THE HISTORY OF THE

CHAPTER VII

"LABORERS TOGETHER WITH GOD"

1885-1958

A WORD TO THE LADIES OF THE MIDDLE DISTRICT ASSOCIATION

As Vice-President of the Central Committee for the Middle District Association, I have been trying during the past summer to stir up the churches of our Association on the subject of Woman's Work for Missions. I have written to the clerks of nearly all of our churches, and to such ladies as they recommended, urging them to form Societies, and to report through our Committee. I pray God to arouse us all to a sense of our personal responsibility in this matter. If the light of the glorious Gospel of our God is to dispel the clouds of sin and darkness which envelop so large a part of the earth, it must be through the individual efforts of those "who profess and call themselves Christians." A practical and homely suggestion to the ladies to whom I have already written, and I am done. We country people have very little money, and very few opportunities for meeting together to devise means to raise money, but we have our turkeys, geese and chickens. I suggest that we carefully tithe these, and give the proceeds to Foreign Missions, sending the money to Mrs. Adam by a delegate to the General Association, which meets in November. Will not a lady in each church take this matter in hand, and talk it into success? So, with the fruit of our lips, and with the work of our hands we will praise the Lord.

Appeal published on October 15, 1885, in the Religious Herald from Miss Bettie B. Meade, Vice-President for Middle District Association of Central Committee for Woman's Work.

As early as 1828, the Hephzibah Female Missionary Society was sending contributions and a male delegate to the Baptist General Association of Virginia. The Bethlehem Female Working Society, organized in 1832, is listed, in 1839, among contributors to missionary causes. Bethel and Muddy Creek Woman's Missionary Societies were recognized in the 1840's as contributors through denominational channels. The Female Education Society of Grub Hill Church, in Amelia County, was contributing as early as 1820, through the Triennial Convention toward the founding of Columbian College in Washington, D. C. The

Female Education Society of Powhatan County, organized in 1830, was the model on which similar societies were organized across the State to aid the Virginia Baptist Education Society in caring for its "preacher boys". In years when Virginia Baptists could not or would not support the Virginia Baptist Seminary, forerunner of the University of Richmond, Dr. Robert Ryland acknowledged with gratitude bundles of peacock feathers sent to him with calendar-like regularity by a member of the Powhatan Society. The feathers were taken by President Ryland to market, sold as advantageously as possible and the proceeds, acknowledged in dollars and cents, applied to the expenses of the young institution which was destined to exert a tremendous influence in Virginia and in the world.

On September 17, 1874, the two-year-old Woman's Missionary Society of Richmond launched a statewide campaign with the two-fold purpose of organizing Woman's Missionary Societies and collecting \$3,000 toward a combination home and workshop in China for the Misses Edmonia and Lottie Moon. The Bethlehem Female Missionary Society was the first Middle District society to respond to this appeal. Early in 1885, the Secretary of the Foreign Mission Board suggested the appointment in each District Association of a Vice-President for Woman's Work "to encourage and form missionary societies in her associational district and bring them in connection with the Central Committee". Mrs. J. B. Jeter, President, and Miss Mamie C. Tupper, Corresponding Secretary, of the Virginia Central Committee, announced in April, 1886, the 21 Vice-Presidents had been appointed and that "a number of them have been serving efficiently for some time, but the larger number have but recently been appointed". So far as we have a record of their activities, the first associational vice-president to launch a vigorous campaign was Middle District's leader, Miss Bettie B. Meade, a constituent member of the Arbor Church. Eighteen hundred and eighty-five is, therefore, the birthdate of the Middle District Woman's Missionary Union and not 1897, when, for the first time, proceedings of its meetings were printed in the Minutes of the Association.

Prior to 1885, Bethlehem, Muddy Creek, Branch's, Skinquarter and Mt. Hermon Woman's Societies were found in the list of contributors published by the Virginia Central Committee for Woman's Work. From 1885 to 1896, the State Committee acknowledged, for the first time, remittances from Skinquarter Girls' Society, Bainbridge and Arbor Missionary Societies (1890), Bethlehem Missionary Society (1891), Second Branch and Tomahawk societies (1892), Enon, Gill's Grove, Mt. Moriah and Union Missionary Societies, Enon and Matoaca Sunbeams (1893), Fine Creek Missionary Society and Peterville Sun-

beams (1895), Peterville Young Cadets, Sandy Creek and Stockton Street Missionary Societies (1896). In liberality and regularity, the Skinquarter Woman's Missionary Society exceeded all the others.

In 1890, Miss Genevieve Rudd, sister to Missionary Bartow Rudd, succeeded Miss Bettie Meade as Vice-President for Middle District Woman's Missionary Union, and in 1894, a cousin, Miss F. Estelle Rudd, was appointed to that position. The name of associational leaders was changed, in 1899, from vice-president to superintendent, and after 1910, superintendents were elected by associational Woman's Missionary Unions. Prior to that year, both vice-presidents and superintendents had been appointed by the State Executive Board.

Miss Meade's work bore fruit, not only in organization of societies and in their co-operation with the Virginia Committee but in associational recognition of Woman's Work. The clerk of the Middle District was instructed, in 1886, to "open a column in the Minutes in which contributions from the ladies' societies would be reported". He was unable to obey this directive since the churches failed to include in their letters to the Association the amounts contributed by the women's societies. "Moreover", the clerk announced, "it would be necessary to have a column for every Missionary Board in order to indicate the distribution of the money from said Society and hence would necessitate the formation of another table.

In 1889, the announcement was made in the Associational meeting that, "The Woman's Missionary Society will hold a meeting in this church today at 2½ o'clock". What transpired at that meeting and whether, without public announcement, the afternoon conferences were continued by Miss Meade and her successors in office, we do not know, but of this fact we are certain—the Woman's Missionary Union of the Middle District Association was well on its way when, in 1897, meeting with the Salem Church, the Association instructed the clerk to "publish the proceedings of the Woman's Missionary Society in the Minutes of this session". We reproduce below that historic page:

APPENDIX

WOMAN'S MISSIONARY SOCIETY

At 11 o'clock, Wednesday morning, there was a meeting of the Woman's Missionary Society of the Middle District Association in the school house on the church grounds. A large crowd of ladies were present, and Miss F. E. Rudd, vice-president of the society, presided. Quite a number of the churches reported at the meeting and much interest was manifested in the future of the society.

Rev. J. B. Williams and Brother C. K. Hening assisted in the

exercises and Professor Winston of Richmond College, delivered the address before the gathering. Efforts were started to further the interest of the society and to secure new members. The promoters of the organizations are very hopeful of a largely increased membership in the future.

CHURCHES	DELEGATES	AMOUNTS
Arbor	None	\$ 2.20
Fine Creek	Miss Lizzie Hening	16.07
Enon	None	13.19
Gill's Grove	Miss Birdie Perkinson	5.95
Mt. Moriah	Miss Estelle Rudd	8.90
Muddy Creek	Miss Estelle Rudd	17.00
Peterville	Miss Estelle Rudd	15.67
Skinquarter	Miss Bernice Rudd	26.10
Union	Miss Perrin	6.50

Peterville has three societies, contributing as follows: Woman's Missionary Society \$11.00, Young Cadets \$1.80, Sunbeams \$2.87. Enon has a Sunbeam Society represented by Mrs. Rae. Several churches sent in their Quarterly Reports instead of Annual, and they are not included in this Report. It is sincerely hoped that every church in the Association will respond to this good work, that there be no idlers in the Lord's Church.

If there was opposition to the organization of Woman's Missionary Societies or to the organization and development of the Middle District Woman's Missionary Union, no evidence of it appeared in the Minutes of the Association. Hearty commendation of the work was voiced, most frequently by Rev. John R. Bagby and Mr. J. Haskins Hobson.

Sometimes it was difficult for the ladies to find a place in which to hold their meetings. There was some confusion, in 1900, when the brethren "kindly gave the ladies the use of the church building for one hour". The program planned by Miss Rudd for that meeting was so absorbing that, at the end of the hour of grace, the ladies were not ready to adjourn. They decided to meet the next day under the arbor. Once more the program was in progress when the brethren, ready for the sermon, arrived at the arbor. The ladies' meeting was adjourned so hurriedly that Miss Rudd did not have opportunity to thank the sisters of the hostess church and those of the Christian churches in the community for their hospitality. This fact she recorded in the "appendix". Again, in 1901, there was a conflict and again Miss Rudd reported:

The ladies did not have their regular meeting because rain interfered with the associational work the first day and the brethren were too busy to spare the church building an hour after that. No house near, so the delegates met Miss Maggie Taylor and the associational superintendent after service Wednesday, August 7th, and handed in their reports and were assigned to their homes.

Year after year, under an arbor or in an adjacent school-house or church building of another denomination, the Woman's Missionary Union called together delegates from her rapidly multiplying societies and those visitors who were interested in woman's work. The number attending the meetings increased so rapidly that, in 1906, the audience, too large to be accommodated in the annex of Bethel's meeting-house, adjourned to the arbor. Something had to be done to solve problems created by spectacular success. The Union had grown from nine women's societies and three young people's missionary societies, reporting in 1897, to 30 societies reporting in 1909, and in contributions from \$111.58 reported in 1897, to \$1,003.56 contributed to missions in 1909. One is somewhat perplexed by the three varying reports recorded in the Minutes of the 1909 sessions of the Association. In a morning session, the following resolution was adopted by the Association:

That, whereas the meetings of the Woman's Missionary Society are held at the same time and place as the meeting of this body, which prevents their attendance on our sessions, and we being very anxious for their attendance, Resolved,

That if our women can arrange to do so, we think it best that our meetings be held at different dates and that a committee of three be appointed to confer with the ladies in carrying out this transaction.

In the "Appendix" for 1909, we find the second version of this matter. It is recorded as follows:

The matter of holding our meeting at a different time and place from the Association was discussed and after the committee from the Association came before us and urged that this be done, it was decided upon, time and place to be agreed upon later and a notice of it to be inserted in the **Religious Herald**.

The Minutes of the afternoon session of the Association give us the third version, of this event, stating:

That we heartily endorse the **request** of the Woman's Missionary and other Societies that they meet at such time and place as they deem best, and further that they furnish the clerk of this body with such reports of the proceedings of their annual meetings as they may think proper for the information of the Association.

So it was done! Who cares in which body the idea originated or whether it came into being at a breakfast table as husband and wife or father and daughter discussed the affairs of the Kingdom? Henceforth, the Woman's Missionary Union would meet at a separate time and place and the sisters would, once more, provide for the brethren their most inspiring listeners. The Woman's Missionary Union selected July as the time for their meetings, but when the brethren decided to move their sessions up from August to July, the ladies were obliging and changed the time of their meetings first to June and then to April.

In the 1909 meeting, the Association asked that the "Woman's Missionary Society" submit her annual report for discussion and printing in the Minutes, and churches were requested to include in their reports to the Association amounts reported by the Sunday School, the Woman's Missionary Societies and all other societies. Not until 1926, when a page was added to the Minutes on which Woman's Missionary Union statistics were assembled, was the purpose of the 1909 request carried out.

During this period, the names of two women appeared with heart-warming regularity in the Annual Appendix to the Minutes. One was Mrs. A. J. Hurt, of Chester, who in 1905 became assistant superintendent of the Association in charge of one of the four groups of societies, and who was elected in 1909 as associational superintendent. In that year the Middle District Woman's Missionary Union went over the \$1,000 mark in its gifts to missions. The other name was Mrs. R. H. Bruce, niece of Miss Harriet Baker, who, in 1849, had gone to China under appointment by the Foreign Mission Board. Mrs. Bruce, who moved her membership in 1908 from Arbor to Chester, was one of the four assistant superintendents appointed in 1905, and in later years served the Association in almost every office recognized by the Union.

Group activities, beginning in 1905, were an important development in the work of the Middle District Union. Groups were subdivided and for a number of years there were six groups instead of four. Later, the number was reduced to five. These groups bore names which were significant in the history of the Association. Three were namesakes of foreign missionaries: Nannie Bland David, Lydia Green and Olive Riddell; two groups adopted the names of former superintendents: Elizabeth White and Elise Murdoch.

Always co-operative, Middle District Woman's Missionary Union leaders were strictly businesslike in their decisions. When asked to contribute 10 dollars toward printing the Minutes of the Association, the Union was agreeable to the proposition, provided 1,000 copies instead of the customary 500 were printed. In the proceedings of the next meeting, we read: "In view of the fact that only 500 copies,

instead of 1,000, were printed, five dollars was given toward the printing of the Minutes and two dollars toward the debt". When the Association redeemed its promise, the Woman's Missionary Union consented to contribute ten dollars toward the Minute Fund. From time to time this annual contribution has been increased.

Pressure was brought, in 1918, upon the superintendent, Mrs. J. T. Bass, to read the report of Woman's Missionary Union to the Association. She persistently declined to do so and the Moderator of the Association relieved her embarrassment by reading the splendid report she had prepared. Since 1921, the superintendent has presented to the Association the report of Woman's Missionary Union. The ladies, however, were the last to discard the chains with which custom had for so many years shackled them.

Special missionary projects have been undertaken by Woman's Missionary Union in addition to regular contributions to the Boards of the denomination and through the three seasons of prayer offerings. The societies participated in the establishment, in 1907, of Woman's Missionary Union Training School; in building for Rev. Walter A. Hash, the first missionary of the State W.M.U., a parsonage in Buchanan County; supported a young woman in Buchanan Mission School; contributed toward the salary of the Y.W.A. missionary in a mining town in Oklahoma. As her share in the Jubilate of the Southern Woman's Missionary Union, Middle District established four \$500 Memorials in the Church Building and Loan Fund of the Home Mission Board. In this magnificent effort, Chester Woman's Missionary Society and Sunbeams named Mrs. R. H. Bruce as beneficiary; Group VI (composed of South Richmond societies) and Powhatan Woman's Missionary Society memorialized Mrs. Beulah O. White; Mt. Moriah, Muddy Creek, Union and Sandy Creek Woman's Missionary Societies established a memorial in the name of Rev. John R. Bagby, and the other societies in the Association established a memorial to Miss Bettie Rae, the founder, in 1893, of the Enon Sunbeam Band. A contribution of \$25.00 toward the Bettie Rae Memorial was received from a business man living in California, who had been a constituent member of Miss Rae's Sunbeam Band. At the close of World War I, White Cross took the place of Red Cross activities and Middle District women and young people have contributed annually toward this department of work which has meant so much to hospitals, welfare centers and leper colonies in the Nigerian Mission of our Convention. Memorials were established to Edward Baptist and Nannie Bland David in the Virginia Baptist Historical Society Wing of the Boatwright Memorial Library of the University of Richmond, which was dedicated in November, 1955.

The record of Middle District Woman's Missionary Union in the 75 Million Campaign is impressive. Asked to give \$27,356.99 in this five-year effort, her members pledged on Victory Sunday \$63,517.80, and, at the close of 1924, were credited with \$54,519.94. In her report to the Association, Mrs. R. H. Bruce, who had guided the Union through the difficult years of this Campaign, stated that at least \$14,000 contributed by Woman's Missionary Union had not been properly credited. Actually, the Middle District W.M.U. went far beyond the amount pledged and almost tripled in gifts the amount suggested as her quota. During the years of financial depression following the 75 Million Campaign, gifts through the Quarter-a-Week Offering and the Debtless Denominational Plan went far toward lifting the debts on the Foreign Mission Board and other missionary agencies of the denomination.

Inspiration came through missionaries adopted by Middle District W.M.U. Through the Christmas Offering, the salary of Mrs. George Green, missionary in Ogbomoso, West Africa, was paid from 1933 until Mrs. Green retired from her missionary post and returned to America. Since 1947, through the Annie Armstrong Thank Offering, Middle District has provided the salaries of Rev. and Mrs. George Wilson, missionaries to the Indians of Oklahoma. While the Olive Riddell group of South Richmond, was its main supporter, the Associational Woman's Missionary Union shared in the founding and maintenance of the South Richmond Good Will Center which was opened in 1936.

Twice Middle District Woman's Missionary Union looked back across the years. Mrs. Bruce presented, in 1925, a sketch of its history, and, in 1944, as preparation for the celebration of the Centennial of the Southern Baptist Convention, Mrs. B. O. Moseley prepared a brief history of the Union's activities since 1898.

Twice the Union has recognized in a tangible way the service of its officers. A corsage of 25 dollar bills was presented to Mrs. Lula Lord upon the completion of her twenty-fifth year as treasurer, and a silver tray to Mrs. George F. Murdoch when, in 1949, she resigned as superintendent, after 14 years of outstanding service in that position. No other superintendent, up to that time, had remained in office longer than six years.

Every superintendent has held before the women of the Association two challenging goals—a missionary society in every church for every age represented in the church and Sunday School, and the dedication of young people to full time Christian service. From 1941 to 1951, every church reported a Woman's Missionary Society and in 1957, the Association regained its 100% standing in the W.M.S. organization. Not yet, however, has the associational youth leader been permitted to report 100% in organizations for young people. A Young

Woman's Auxiliary Council was organized in 1956, and in May, 1957, in an associational Youth Rally with 176 in attendance, 33 young people who had dedicated their lives to full time service in the denomination took part on the program. Two young women preparing for missionary service are being aided by scholarships established by the Union, one in the Virginia Baptist Hospital in Lynchburg, the other in Westhampton College.

With Mrs. H. E. Jackson, superintendent since 1951 as her leader, Middle District Woman's Missionary Union presses on to complete organization and more faithful enlistment of time, talents, prayer and gifts. With the fruit of their lips, the work of their hands and the ever-increasing devotion of their hearts, the women and young people of Middle District Association continue to praise the Lord.

MIDDLE DISTRICT ASSOCIATION

CHAPTER VIII

NEW HEIGHTS OF ACHIEVEMENT

1934-1958

1925 still stands as the high mark of associational achievement, but when the "depression"—economic and spiritual—is over, and when sanity, sobriety, faith and courage again find their dwelling among men, the Middle District will stretch its wings and attain new heights.

Dr. Garnett Ryland in the Historical Address, delivered before the Middle District Association in its Sesqui-Centennial celebration.

Until 1857, with the exception of the Manchester and Midlothian African churches, which in 1846, had been added to its rolls, the Middle District Association had been composed of churches located in what came to be known in Southern Baptist, Virginia and Middle District terminology as "OC", or "open country". At the time of its Sesqui-Centennial meeting, practically half of the church membership and more than half of the auxiliary activities were represented in reports from South Richmond and suburban churches. For some of the rural churches there seemed to be, at that time, little hope of survival. The Committee on Rural Churches, which had been added, in 1930, to the list of standing committees, followed for a decade the pattern established by the Southern Baptist Convention in urging consolidation as the only solution of the problems facing many country churches. In his Historical Address, delivered in the 1883 meeting of the Association, Rev. Luther W. Moore had suggested that there were too many churches. Not a church in the Middle District, however, consented to dissolve its constitution. Consolidation was not the answer.

The economic tide which had gone out so disastrously in 1933, began, in the year 1935, to come in again. A large part of Chesterfield County became industrialized, particularly the section between Richmond and Petersburg and Richmond and Midlothian. During this period, Richmond annexed Manchester and Westover Hills, taking 7.27 square miles of Chesterfield soil and Colonial Heights coveted and secured 5.6 square miles of Chesterfield territory at the other edge of the county. Automobiles made it possible for those living in rural areas to work in the city or in its suburbs. There was a steady migration of home builders from the city to the quiet and peace of

the country. Opportunities for evangelism and enlistment were multiplied and Middle District Association mobilized its forces to meet this new day. The problems mentioned in 1940, by the Rural Committee of the Association were no longer so formidable.

From 1930 to 1940, with a population increase of 10%, membership in the rural churches of the Association increased 33%, the value of property owned by its churches increased 12%, and salaries paid to its pastors 7%. The Rural Church Committee, in its 1941 report to the Association, congratulated the rural churches "in that the majority of them are located in growing communities". A new symbol—"CS"—appeared in statistical columns. The suburban church had become a factor in associational policies. The Executive Committee of the Association, which had been enlarged in 1942 to include the pastors and leaders in each church, moved with the times. Woodland Heights and Kingsland churches reported, in 1946, the maintenance of mission Sunday schools; Westover Church, composed of members living in one of the new suburban areas, was received in 1947; one year later, Branch's Church reported a mission Sunday school located on Courthouse Road. Bellwood Manor Church was received in 1949.

As Richmond churches, urged on by a reactivated Baptist Council, became more aggressive in their cultivation of suburban areas, the idea of a City Association increased its pressure. A Committee to confer with a similar group from the Dover Association had been appointed, in 1941, by the Middle District. The suggestion was advanced that South Richmond churches might unite with the Dover Association. That suggestion was emphatically rejected by those churches. Agitation for a Richmond Association was, in 1948, renewed and another committee was appointed to confer with a committee from the Dover. This joint committee reported, in 1949 to both Associations that: "It will be to mutual advantage of both the rural and city churches that a Richmond Association be organized". The Middle District gave to its Executive Committee authority to grant letters to churches desiring to unite in forming such an Association. The separation, however, was not a matter of weeks or months, but of years. On New Year's Day of 1951, nine churches which had been connected with the Middle District Association, joined with 27 North Richmond churches in forming the Richmond Baptist Association.

With five village, two town and twenty-three "open country" churches, Middle District faced the challenging opportunity which changing conditions presented to her churches. Associational dues were increased from 5c to 10c and, later, to 15c per member reported by the churches to the Association. An Extension Committee was appointed, in 1952, to work closely with similar committees of the

Dover and Richmond Associations. The addition, in 1950, of Southside Church; of Jahnke Road, (a mission of Woodland Heights Church) in 1952; of Memorial (the Warwick Road Chapel of Branch's Church) in 1955, and, in 1956, of Southampton Church, a newly constituted church in the Stratford Hills area, brought to 34 the number of churches reporting in the 1957 meeting of the Association. Strangely enough, 34 had been the approximate number of churches in the territory assigned, in 1783, by the General Annual Association to the District below the James River. Matoaca Church, constituted in 1858, requested in 1957, a letter of dismission to the Petersburg Association, reducing to 33 the number of Middle District churches.

During the last 25 years, emphases have changed from "fields" of churches served by one pastor, to full time pastoral leadership and every Sunday worship services in every church. Letters to the Association, meeting in May, 1957, revealed an amazing progress toward this goal. There were seven churches with twice-a-month preaching services, three with the pastor present four times a month (but not on fifth Sundays); 24 churches reported every Sunday worship services. Sunday school enrollment, in 1957, was around 8,000. The vital service rendered by the Baptist Training Union had won its way into the life of 25 of the 34 churches, whereas, in 1952, only 13 churches had reported units of the Training Union. Contributions to general denominational causes, during the last five years, had increased from thirty-five thousand to fifty-eight thousand dollars. Work among the men was reactivated in 1954 by the appointment of an associational chairman for Brotherhood promotion. Fifty-nine laymen and pastors from 13 churches met at Chester on March 28, 1955, to consider the value of this new organization. Seven churches reported, in 1957, an enthusiastic Brotherhood organization. The Pastor's Conference, reactivated in 1925, provides a splendid channel for fellowship.

Four very beautiful reminders of the past occurred during the period which separated the Sesqui-Centennial from the 175th Anniversary of the Association. On September 30, 1939, a marker was dedicated on the site of old Nottoway Baptist Church, the mother church of many churches in Amelia and Powhatan Counties. This was a project initiated in the 1934 meeting of the Middle District Association and carried out in cooperation with the Appomattox and Concord Associations. Dr. J. G. Loving was chairman of the tri-associational committee which carried through this notable memorial.

Ten years later, Rev. H. D. Anderson, retiring moderator of the Middle District Association, presented to that body a gavel the base of which was made of wood from a walnut tree in the churchyard of Old Nottoway Baptist Church and the handle from a walnut tree on the property of Old Powhatan Church.

When the Association met in 1943, tribute was paid to the beloved Robert H. Winfree who with his father, Rev. David B. Winfree, had filled out almost 100 years of glorious ministry within the Middle District. Since 1923, Winfree Memorial, at Midlothian, had replaced the Jerusalem Church, constituted in 1852. Winfree Memorial, therefore, is a perpetual reminder of father and son, whose ministry spanned a century of devoted pastoral leadership in this and other churches in the Association.

The Middle District paused in its 1947 Annual Meeting to recognize Mr. A. H. Goode, member of Mt. Hermon Church, and chairman of the Auditing Committee of the Association, who had been for 66 years a member of the body.

Reminded in 1955 that its 175th anniversary would dawn with the year 1958, the Association appointed a committee to formulate plans for a fitting celebration of that event. The committee charged with the responsibility of leading in planning for this celebration included, Rev. William D. Dietrich, Jr., Chairman, Rev. John P. Batkins, Rev. William C. Shawen, Rev. W. B. Ingram. Branch's Church was chosen as the hostess church for the 175th anniversary meeting, which was set for May 13-14, 1958. The committee arranged for the preparation and publication of a history of the Association and requested the Woman's Missionary Union, under the capable leadership of its superintendent, Mrs. H. E. Jackson, to have prepared and to present on the evening of May 13, 1958, a pageant portraying highlights of the history.

* * * * *

"The Past is Prologue". Oldest, in point of name, of the 40 District Associations now on the rolls of the Baptist General Association of Virginia; mother of four of those Associations; reduced in territory from sixteen counties to three, the Middle District continues a journey which began in 1784. Five churches which may have participated in the constitution of the Association remain within her fellowship, viz., Old Powhatan, Sandy Creek, Muddy Creek, Tomahawk and Skinquarter. Old in years, young in vision and vigor, her leaders believe that "the golden age" is not in the past but in the future. As the Middle District moves on toward her second centennial, we wish to remind the churches and their members of the splendid heights of achievement suggested to the Association by Moderator J. Levering Evans when he said:

If you will visualize with us every church in the Association active in the gospel ministry in all its branches,—regular preaching of the Word, regular teaching of the Word, regular training in the work of the Lord, regular study and growth in missionary enlistment: if you will visualize with us baptisms in every church, every community enlightened by the lives and leadership of men and women, trained in our churches, to

deal with the problems of the day in the light of the knowledge of Jesus Christ; if you can visualize every area in the three counties of this Association with a church or mission station within a reasonable walking distance of every one—then you will see what lies ahead of us in the way of an associational task.

Even so may it be!

THE HISTORY OF THE

APPENDIX A—CHURCHES

I. CHURCHES IN TERRITORY ASSIGNED IN 1783 TO "THE LOWER DISTRICT BELOW THE JAMES RIVER WHICH MAY HAVE PARTICIPATED IN THE CONSTITUTION OF THE MIDDLE DISTRICT ASSOCIATION."

(It is probable that, in 1784, several of these churches were affiliated with the Kehukee or Henry Associations.)

Church	County	Date of Constitution	Membership
			Reported in 1790 in Asplund's Register
Fall's Creek	Pittsylvania	1760	68
Birch's Mill	Pittsylvania	1769	51
Nottoway	Nottoway	1769	260
Mill Church	Pittsylvania	1770	63
Buckingham	Buckingham	1771	*290
County Line	Pittsylvania	1771	71
Cub Creek	Charlotte	1771	50
Meherrin	Lunenburg	1771	37
Powhatan	Powhatan	1771	120
Bluestone	Mecklenburg	1772	83
Staunton River	Charlotte	1772	58
Appomattox	Appomattox	1773	270
Catawba River	Halifax	1773	68
Chesterfield	Chesterfield	1773	*200
Harper's	Dinwiddie	1773	*30
Malone's	Mecklenburg	1773	*39
Reedy Creek	Lunenburg	1775	76
Rock's	Prince Edward	1772	20
Upper Bannister	Pittsylvania	1773	*40
Winn's Creek	Halifax	1773	60
Mayo Creek	Halifax	1774	140
Muddy Creek	Powhatan	1774	100
Providence	Buckingham	1774	*50
Hunting Creek	Halifax	1775	*80
Reedy Creek	Lunenburg	1775	80
Buffalo	Halifax	1776	*87
Tanner's Creek	Amelia	1776	22

Tomahawk	Chesterfield	1777	55
Tussekiah	Lunenburg	1777	140
Buffalo	Mecklenburg	1778	75
Skinquarter	Chesterfield	1778	90
Cedar Creek	Lunenburg	1779	50
Musterfield	Halifax	1779	*38
Falling River	Campbell	1780	70
Sailor Creek	Prince Edward	1781	133
Childrey Creek	Halifax	1783	73

*Number of members not reported by Asplund. Figures taken from 1809 membership as reported by Semple.

II. CHURCHES DISMISSED IN 1788 TO CONSTITUTE THE ROANOKE (PITTSYLVANIA) ASSOCIATION

Strawberry, Childrey, Catawba, Millstone, Winn's Creek, Birch Creek, Mill, New Mill House, Buffalo, Miller's Ferry, Cammell, Mayo, Grassy Creek (N. C.), Sandy Creek, Bluestone, Bannister, Fall's Creek, County Line, Mossingford.

III. CHURCHES DISMISSED IN 1804 TO CONSTITUTE THE APPOMATTOX ASSOCIATION

Ebenezer, Ash Camp, Cub Creek, Sandy Creek (returned in 1821 to the Middle District), Buckingham, Mountain Creek, Wrack Island, Appomattox, Union, Rock's, Sailor Creek, Providence.

IV. CHURCHES DISMISSED IN 1804 TO CONSTITUTE THE MEHERRIN (CONCORD) ASSOCIATION

Sandy Creek, Cedar Creek, Malone's, Allen's Creek, Reedy Creek, Meherrin, James Square, Wilson's, Red Creek, Bethel, Cut Banks of Nottoway.

V. CHURCHES DISMISSED IN 1950-51 TO CONSTITUTE THE RICHMOND BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

Bainbridge Street, Clopton Street, Oak Grove, Pinehurst, Stockton Street, Weatherford Memorial, Webber Memorial, Westover, Woodland Heights.

THE HISTORY OF THE

VI. SKETCHES OF CHURCHES IN FELLOWSHIP WITH THE MIDDLE DISTRICT ASSOCIATION ON JANUARY 1, 1958

AMELIA

Wiley Paul, Clerk of Church

Constituted, December 18, 1914 from mission established by Rev. W. M. Hall; 12 constituent members; first house of worship completed in November, 1923; educational building erected in 1951. Pastors: Joel T. Tucker, 1916-1921; W. W. Reynolds, 1923-1927; P. E. Brame, 1928; W. T. McChesney, 1929-1930; R. D. White, 1931-1948; G. Lee McIntyre, 1949-1950; W. Coley Coston, 1951-1952; Horace E. Story, 1953-1957; John T. Lennon, 1958 to the present time.

ARBOR

Miss Myrtle Barden, Reporter

Constituted, 1880; 50 constituent members, some of whom came from Mt. Tabor Baptist Church whose building was then sold to the colored people; first house of worship completed, 1881 or 1882; daughter church, Amelia Baptist. Pastors: George Hurt in its earliest years; A. B. Rudd, 1885; S. J. Atkins, 1886; J. R. Harrison, 1888-1889; R. H. Rudd, 1892 and 1895-1903; J. R. Wilkinson, 1893; L. W. Smith, 1904; A. Davidson, 1906-1907; R. Bowling, 1908; J. B. Hill, 1909; W. B. Miller, 1910; J. E. Welsh, 1911-1912; W. M. Hall, 1913-1915; Joel T. Tucker, 1916-1921; W. W. Reynolds, 1922-1927; P. E. Brame, 1928; W. T. McChesney, 1929-1930; R. D. White, 1931-1948; G. Lee McIntyre, 1949; Warren Russell, 1950; Richard W. McKay, 1951; Coan Agee, 1952-1953; Jerry Mehaffey, 1954-1955; Rev. John Bloxam, 1958 to present time.

BELLWOOD MANOR

Mrs. E. K. Mugler, Clerk of Church

Constituted, February 27, 1949; 87 constituent members; dedication of house of worship, November 1, 1949; new Sunday school building dedicated September 30, 1951. Pastors: John W. Hicks, 1950, Harry Long, 1951 to the present time.

BETHEL

Miss Dorothy Hudson, Clerk of Church

In 1789, a few brethren and sisters, who were members of Spring Creek (now Bethlehem), but who lived in the neighborhood in which Bethel now stands, commenced holding prayer-meetings at a place

called Short's Stage. Here and at other places in the neighborhood, Benjamin Watkins had frequent appointments for preaching. During the great revival which soon followed . . . this little band received a considerable accession. They were constituted into a church of 56 members on April 12, 1817, the presbytery consisting of John Woolridge, Edmund Goode, William Flourney and Jordan Martin.—(Moore's History.)

The first meeting-house was erected sometime prior to 1803; present house of worship erected in 1894; parsonage erected in 1947; daughter churches: Jerusalem Baptist Church (1851). Pastors: Benjamin Watkins, 1817-1831; Anderson Johnson, 1832-1843; Beverly C. Hancock, 1843-1849; David B. Winfree, 1850-1851; J. M. Butler, 1852-1853; William S. Bland, 1853-1854 and 1868-1876; H. G. Crews, 1854-1859; R. N. Lee, 1859 and 1860-1861; Luther W. Moore, 1863-1867 and 1878-1882; David B. Winfree, 1883-1888; Robert H. Winfree, 1889-1941; Philip H. Tomlinson, 1941-1943; Preston J. Taylor, 1947-1949; Ray E. Smith, 1949 to the present time.

BETHLEHEM

Mrs. George N. Moore, Jr., Clerk of the Church

Elder Benjamin Watkins was instrumental in the formation of this church. It was constituted July 25, 1790, with 27 members. Eleazer Clay, William Webber and George Smith constituted the presbytery. Until the year 1792, it was known as Cox's meeting-house. From that time until 1855, it bore the name of Spring Creek. A branch of Spring Creek, known as the Bethlehem Meeting-house, was noted in the Minutes of the Middle District Association sometime prior to 1814, and in 1855, the name Bethlehem was substituted for that of Spring Creek. (Facts drawn from Histories of church by Moore and Mrs. W. C. James.)

Additional building enterprises: Parsonage, 1947; basement unit for new meeting-house, October, 1941; two floors built over basement, completing educational building, October, 1955. Daughters of church: Bethel, 1817, Midlothian African, 1843, Manchester African, 1842. Pastors: Benjamin Watkins, 1790-1831; Jordan Martin (supply) 1831-1839 and pastor, 1839-1847; Reuben Ford, 1848-1852; William S. Bland (except for 1867), 1853-1876; J. A. Leslie, 1878-1881; David B. Winfree, 1883-1887; J. M. Morris, 1888; Eldridge B. Hatcher, 1889; J. B. Williams, 1890-1895; M. A. Martin, 1897-1899; J. A. Sullivan, 1900 and 1901; L. L. Gwaltney, 1902-1903; Joel T. Tucker, 1905-1910; A. T. King, 1911; O. O. Dietz, 1912-1916; W. R. Page, 1917; A. C. Cheatham, 1919; W. R. Carner, 1920-1926; David F. White, 1927; W. T. Burton, 1928; L. C. Crump, 1929-1934; Paul A. Deibert, 1935-1938; Dr. William Carey James, 1938-1946; A. D. Clark Jr., 1947-1952; Charlie H. Bradley, 1953-1957; Rev. N. Turner, 1958 to present time.

BRANCH'S

Rev. Moffett C. Booker, Pastor

In the year 1814, a small group of Baptists who had been worshipping at the old Chesterfield Church decided to organize a mission near the site of our present Branch's Church building. It was for about fourteen years "an arm of Chesterfield Church" (or Clay's Meeting-House), which had been constituted in 1773. In the early days this mission church was generally known as "The Baptist Church of Christ at Hephzibah." Constituted as a separate church on May 10, 1828, with Charles Forsee, Jordan Martin, Leonard Nunnally and Peter M. Cary officiating as the presbytery. On July 8, 1876, the church voted to change its name from Hephzibah to Branch's. (From "Along The Way From Hephzibah to Branch's," by Rev. Wales B. Ingram.)

Moved into second building, 1913; concrete block building constructed in 1946; present church auditorium erected in 1948; educational building constructed in 1955; parsonage purchased in 1932; sold in 1955 and new parsonage built. Daughter churches, Memorial and Southside Baptist. Pastors: Joel Johns, 1839-1841; Joseph S. Walthall, 1841-1845; Jacob Tinsley (co-pastor), 1845; Reuben Ford, 1847-1852; B. E. Cosby, 1855-1856 and 1858-1859; Gilbert Mason, 1860-1865; R. W. Cridlin, 1866-1870; J. L. Lawless, 1873-1874; J. A. Leslie, 1875-1877; T. J. Nettles, 1878-1880; Thomas E. Reynolds, 1880-1881; A. J. Reamy, 1881-1882; I. M. Mercer, 1882 (3 months); Joel T. Tucker, 1883-1886 and 1905-1910; I. T. Wallace, 1886 (3 months); W. B. Tyler, 1886-1887; John Bethel, 1887 (4 months); J. D. Martin, 1887-1890; Dr. Alfred Bagby, 1890-1892; J. B. Childress, 1893; J. R. Wilkerson, 1894-1895; T. Ryland Sanford, 1901-1902; W. S. Brooke, 1904-1905; A. T. King, 1911 (2 months); O. O. Dietz, 1911-1916; W. T. Page, 1917-1918; A. C. Jones, 1919-1920; Dr. Robert T. Marsh, 1921-1931; Howard L. Arthur, 1931-1941; Samuel R. Stone, 1941-1945; Joseph H. Cosby, 1946-1951; Moffett C. Booker, 1951 to the present time.

CENTRAL

Rev. William D. Dietrich Jr., Pastor

On January 21, 1900, an Ecclesiastical Council called by the Spring Creek Baptist Mission convened in the old building of the Bethlehem Baptist Church, Chesterfield County, for the purpose of organizing a Baptist Church. After hearing reasons for desiring a church body, the Council recommended that the Spring Creek Baptist Mission be organized into a regular church body when it shall have twenty-five members with their letters. On April 1, 1900, the twenty-five necessary members, with letters, having been secured, the Central Baptist Church was duly organized with the Rev. S. P.

DeVault, Pastor, Richard Howlett, Clerk, James Hancock, Winston Mitchell, I. R. Condrey and E. R. Leonard, Deacons . . . Five beautiful acres were given by W. H. LaPrade on Courthouse Road on which to erect the church building. (History, Central Baptist Church).

A parsonage was erected in recent years and an educational building was dedicated in October, 1954. Pastors: S. P. DeVault, 1901; St. George Abrahams, 1901-1909; Joel T. Tucker, 1910; W. B. Miller, 1913-1914; F. B. Hart, 1915-1916; W. P. Page, 1917; Robert H. Winfree, 1919-1922; W. R. Carner, 1923-1925; David F. White, 1926-1927; W. T. Burton, 1928; L. C. Crump, 1929-1934; Paul Deibert, 1935-1938; O. W. Paterson, 1939-1941; Paul G. Wiley, 1942-1946; Robert E. Brown, 1947-1952; William D. Dietrich, Jr., 1953 to the present time.

CHESTER

Rev. Herman C. Inge, Pastor

The first step taken in the establishment of Baptist work in the village of Chester was the organization, on December 3, 1904, of a Woman's Missionary Society. Mrs. A. J. Hurt was its president. One of the first subjects of discussion was the need for a Baptist church in the village. Even the children in the community heard the talk about a church; and one day in the parlor of the hotel where Mrs. Hurt and her husband were living, the proprietor's little daughter said to Mrs. Hurt, "Do you want us to help you build your church?" "Yes," replied Mrs. Hurt, "I certainly do." The little girl and her two sisters had an entertainment in the parlor of the hotel from which they collected \$1.36. This was the first money received for the building of a church at Chester. (The History of Chester Baptist Church, by Evelyn G. Murphy.)

Constituted October 31, 1905; 19 constituent members; moved into first house of worship, 1908; parsonage erected in 1917; educational section added in 1927; basement excavated and Sunday school rooms provided in 1956; speakers provided for chimes and organ; two worship services have been held since October, 1953, and plans are progressing for construction of new sanctuary. Pastors: Arthur Davidson, 1906; T. C. Whitehurst, 1907-1908; W. H. Lawson, 1908-1911; J. M. Pilcher, 1913-1915; Ryland T. Dodge, 1917-1922; T. W. Page, 1923-1927; W. C. Shawen, 1929-1946; F. H. Scott, 1947-1948; J. A. Brown, 1950-1952; Herman C. Inge, 1953 to the present time.

CHESTERFIELD

Constituted, August 22, 1773, by 20 members formerly connected with Old Powhatan Church, known at that time as "The Church of Christ in Cumberland." Eleazer Clay, first pastor, ordained in May 1775. Church adopted name of Rehoboth, but was known also as

"Clay's" and "Chesterfield." Mother of Salem, Hephzibah, Second Branch, Mt. Olivet. Withdrew from Middle District Association in 1836, to unite with other churches in constitution of Zoar Association; returned to the Middle District Association in 1855; excluded from that body in 1867. Meeting-house at Rehoboth burned in 1891, and no more information can be secured concerning this, the oldest Baptist church in Chesterfield County.

On November 14, 1857, eight persons, having obtained letters, met in the Chesterfield meeting-house (not Rehoboth, which had been destroyed by fire), and with the aid of representatives from Old Powhatan Church, were constituted as the Chesterfield Baptist Church. In July, 1879, this body united with the Staunton River Primitive Baptist Association. In July, 1889, minutes of the church state that no messenger was appointed to that body. No minutes of the church are available from May 20, 1893, to November 30, 1907. Robert H. Winfree, at that time pastor of Bethel, Bethlehem, Mt. Hermon, Powhatan, Red Lane and Jerusalem Baptist Churches, gathered together the scattered congregation in this neighborhood and began preaching for them. During the closing weeks of 1907, and the opening weeks of 1908, 17 persons, having obtained letters from Skinquarter, Tomahawk and Mt. Hermon churches, respectively, joined the Chesterfield Church.

On February 16, 1908, the church met to ordain deacons, and in March of that year, Robert H. Winfree was called as pastor. Chesterfield Church was received into the Middle District Association in its 1908 Annual Meeting. Moved into new house of worship in 1911; remodeled building, added Sunday school classrooms and installed central heating in 1954. Celebrated centennial in 1957; history of church prepared with aid of Miss Lucile Hudgins, of the Virginia Baptist Historical Society, as one feature of Centennial Celebration. Pastors: Joseph G. Woodfin, 1857-1893; T. J. Bowman, 1893- ? ; Robert H. Winfree, 1908-1910; Wirt L. Davis, 1910-1911; W. B. Miller, 1911-1913; E. V. Peyton, 1913-1915; F. B. Hart, 1915-1917; C. C. Hedrick, 1918-1919; W. B. Ingram, 1921-1924; Mercer O. Clark, 1924-1928; W. E. Cullers, 1929-1939; E. E. Northen, Jr., 1939-1942; J. Parks Hackley, 1942-1946; Zane Grey Ross, 1946-1950; F. Lawson Pankey, 1951-1954; T. Brock, 1955-1956; Vincent Williams, 1956 to the present time.

ENON

John A. Strachan may be regarded as the founder of this church. He removed to Bermuda Hundred in 1845. As there was no Baptist church in the community, he determined to make an earnest effort to establish one. He succeeded in building a meeting house, and then opened a Sunday school. J. W. Fussell preached regularly for them, and J. L. Trueman, occasionally. In September, 1849, these two

brethren held a protracted meeting, and a few persons professed conversion. These with four brethren and sisters living in the neighborhood were constituted into a church by Samuel Taylor, J. W. Fussell and J. L. Trueman. . . . From its organization to the close of 1856, Elder Trueman was pastor. . . . During the War the house of worship was destroyed; services were suspended for two years and the membership was very much reduced and scattered. After the war, 22 members were collected. They rebuilt their house, and resumed regular services. (Moore's History).

Sunday school rooms added, 1939. Pastors: J. L. Trueman, 1849-1856; Jeremiah Porter, 1857-1858; J. A. Strachan, 1859-1874; J. A. Leslie, 1875; Aaron Jones, 1879-1880; T. J. Nettles, 1881; M. L. Wood, 1883-1884; J. A. Baker, 1885; John A. Barker, 1885-1887; J. D. Martin, 1888-1890; Alfred Bagby, 1891-1892 and 1894-1901; R. H. Rudd, 1893 and 1902-1906; T. C. Whitehearst, 1907-1908; W. H. Lawson, 1909-1912; John M. Pilcher, 1912-1915; H. T. Clark, 1916; Ryland T. Dodge, 1916-1922. T. W. Page, 1923-1928; W. C. Shawen, 1929-1946; Clyde F. Melton, 1948-1949; Lawrence C. Harrison, 1951-1957; Charles Dick, 1958 to present time.

FINE CREEK

C. B. DeNoon, Clerk of Church

This church was an arm of Muddy Creek. It was constituted in March, 1850, with Cornelius Tyree as pastor. (Moore's History).

One-hundred-fifty-eight members; moved into first house of worship in 1853; in 1902 moved from old site to point about 50 yards away and erected new building; new Sunday school rooms added in March, 1949; in January, 1957, six more Sunday school rooms added and central heating installed in sanctuary and Sunday school rooms; parsonage sold in 1957. Pastors: Cornelius Tyree, 1850-1863 and 1866-1872; J. C. Long, 1864-1865; Luther W. Moore, January, 1873—February, 1874; John R. Bagby, 1874; R. W. Cridlin, 1875-1878; F. H. James, 1879-1880; R. B. Boatwright, 1883-1884; F. R. Underwood, 1886-1887; J. H. Harrison, 1889-1903; G. W. Putney, 1904-1905; H. D. Ragland, 1906-1910; E. G. Mintz, 1911-1913; E. E. Northen, 1914; Perry Mitchell, 1915-1916; H. C. Hoffman, 1917; N. F. Jacobs, 1918; G. S. Venable, 1919-1923; C. J. Ashley, 1924-1925; S. T. Habel, Jr., 1927; Edward W. Eanes, 1928-1930; Curtis Cleveland, 1932-1933; J. R. Stiff, 1931 and 1934-1938; H. D. Anderson, 1939-1956; John Chaffee to present time.

GILL'S GROVE

Rev. James N. Birkitt, Pastor

Samuel Taylor was instrumental in the formation of this church. He had preached stately in the neighborhood for nearly a year be-

fore his labors began to produce any visible effort. At length, observing on one occasion, usual solemnity in the congregation, he determined to commence a meeting of several days, and accordingly made the appointment. As a result of this meeting, twelve persons professed conversion. These converts, with five brethren from Second Branch, were constituted into a church September 22, 1843, by Samuel Taylor and Leonard Nunnely. (Moore's History).

First house of worship erected in 1852; building remodeled in 1884; Sunday school addition built in 1954; redecorated sanctuary, 1956. Daughter church, Matoaca, 1858. Pastors: Samuel Taylor, 1843-1874; J. L. Trueman, 1874-1879 and 1880-1881; J. A. Powers, 1879-1880; T. J. Nettles, 1883-1888; J. T. Betts, 1890-1891; T. Claggett Skinner (supply) 1892; W. B. Brown, 1892-1894; W. H. Rogers, 1894-1895; R. H. Rudd, 1895-1897; Sidney M. Sowell (supply), 1899; J. W. Cammack, 1899-1900; T. Ryland Sanford, 1901-1903; A. D. Davidson, 1904-1905; J. T. Haley, 1905-1908; W. M. Bloxom, 1909-1911; N. F. Loffin, 1912; Floyd P. David, 1913-1915; H. C. Rufin, 1922-1927; J. E. Shockley, 1928-1934; E. M. Collier, 1935-1943; L. R. Freeman, 1943-1945; J. W. Hackley, Jr., 1946; R. D. Stennett, 1947-1951; Allen B. Walsh, 1952-1954; James N. Birkitt, 1956 to 1957.

GRACELAND

Rev. Coah G. Agee, Pastor

Constituted in 1888 by members of Skinquarter Baptist Church; constituent members 5; first house of worship erected in 1891; church moved its meeting-house, in 1939, 23½ feet from original site; five new Sunday school rooms added in 1941 and a new wing in 1953; auditorium redecorated in 1954; water put in church, 1956. Church Building burned January, 1958. Pastors: E. T. Higgason, 1894-1895; Landon Green, 1899-1900; R. W. Cridlin, 1901-1902; St. George Abraham, 1905-1906; A. D. Davidson, 1907; W. B. Miller, 1910; J. E. Welsh, 1911; W. M. Hall, 1913-1915; O. B. Kinney, 1916-1917; 1920, R. J. Kirby (supply); W. V. Smith, 1921-1936; Charles B. Reed, 1938-1944; Geo. W. Reynolds, 1945-1946; R. J. Castleberry, 1947; W. Carlton Long, 1949-1950; Chas. W. Gibson, 1951-1952; Coan G. Agee, 1954-1957.

JAHNKE ROAD

Lewis M. Gee, Clerk of Church

Constituted, July 9, 1950, from mission of Woodland Heights Baptist Church, constituent members, 307; moved into first house of worship, July 9, 1950; purchased Sunday school annex in October, 1952; purchased parsonage April 12, 1951; more room needed at this time to care for congregation and Sunday school. Pastor: Charles S. Trammell, 1951 to the present time.

KINGSLAND

John S. Scherer, Clerk of Church

Constituted June 4, 1905; constituent members, 26; moved into first house of worship June 4, 1905; moved in 1920, to present location two miles west of first site; five Sunday school classrooms added, 1932; Sunday school building erected, extensive building improvements made, organ and pews installed in sanctuary in 1953. Pews were gift of Mrs. Lela Bellwood in memory of her sisters, Mrs. Etta Brown; more rooms is needed at present; parsonage purchased in 1955. Pastors' J. T. Nettles, 1905; Lawrence Sayer, 1906; Joel T. Tucker, 1907-1909 and 1911-1915; T. W. Croxton, 1910; R. L. Matthews, 1916; E. T. Smith, 1919; C. T. Herring, 1920; D. E. Wood, 1921; H. V. Smith, 1922; Ernest Cooke, 1923 N. F. Jacobs, 1925-1926 C. L. Woodward, 1927-1929; J. P. Wilborne, 1930; W. T. McChesney, 1931-1934; P. L. Bard, 1935-1936; P. H. Tomlinson, 1937-1940; Ortie E. Bradshaw, 1941-1949; Oscar L. Emerick, Jr., 1951-1954; James W. Russ 1955 to the present time.

MAY MEMORIAL

Mrs. C. E. Bevins

Constituted in November, 1907, of 291 members; Red Lane Baptist Church most interested in its constitution; moved into its first house of worship on February 10, 1908; moved to adjoining lot at Powhatan Courthouse; moved into new educational building on January 17, 1954. Pastors: J. W. Reynolds, 1907-1928; Edward T. Eanes, 1929-1930; J. R. Stiff, 1931 and 1934-1938; Curtis Cleveland, 1932-1933; H. D. Anderson, 1938-1956; John Chaffee 1957 to the present time.

MEMORIAL

Constituted on April 17, 1955 Mission for several years of Branch's Baptist Church, known as Warwick Road Chapel; constituent members, 223; moved into its first house of worship in 1951; purchased in 1956 7½ acres of land five blocks from present meeting house; moved into first unit of new building in September, 1957; purchased parsonage in 1953. Already need more room. Pastor: Charles W. Gibson, 1953 to the present time.

MT. HERMON

Rev. John P. Batkins, Pastor

Constituted on June 20, 1835, with 16 members who withdrew from Skinquarter. In 1837, the church enjoyed a great revival. 31 were added by baptism, while some joined other churches. (Moore's History)

The church has worshipped in two buildings, one erected soon after its constitution and the second, erected in 1859, across the road from the original house of worship; in 1946 a modern, two-story brick parsonage was erected; church now planning to erect a modern unit for Sunday school and other organizations. Pastors: Samuel Dorest, 1835-1849; David B. Winfree, 1851-1872; William S. Bland, 1875; W. L. Fitcher, 1876-1878; A. E. Dickinson (supply) 1878-1880; David B. Winfree, 1880-1888; Robert H. Winfree, 1888-1941; Philip H. Tomlinson, 1941-1943; George H. Lawrence, 1946-1950; John P. Batkins, 1950 to the present time.

MT. HOPE

James H. Smith, Clerk of Church

Constituted November 20, 1858, by Gilbert Mason and Samuel Taylor; moved into first house of worship, May 20, 1858, and dedicated it on the fourth Sunday in July, 1859; first building burned, March 18, 1956; new building dedicated, July 14, 1957. Pastors: Gilbert Mason, 1858-1859; Thomas W. Sydnor, 1860-1870; R. W. Cridlin, 1874-1875; W. L. Fitcher, 1875-1882; A. B. Rudd, 1885; T. J. Nettles, 1886-1887; R. L. Gay, 1888; E. C. Root, 1891; R. H. Rudd, 1896-1899; J. L. Hart, 1900; R. T. Stables, 1901-1902; H. C. Dunn, 1905; J. A. Tatum, 1906; A. D. Davidson, 1907; W. M. Thompson, 1909; W. B. Miller, 1910; J. B. Welsh, 1911-1912; W. M. Hall, 1913-1915; Joel T. Tucker, 1916-1921; W. W. Reynolds, 1922-1927; P. E. Brame, 1928; W. T. McChesney, 1929-1930; R. D. White, 1931-1937; E. C. Davis, 1938-1941; H. C. Jones, 1942-1943; Geo. E. Reynolds, 1945-1946; J. P. Elliott, 1948-1951; Coan Agee, 1952-1953; Jerry Manaffey, 1954-1957; John Bloxom 1958 to present time.

MT. MORIAH

Mrs. B. E. Walthall

The real beginning was a Sunday school, meeting in a barn on the property of Mr. Lewis McLaurin, a building which had been fitted up as a school house. Church constituted, September 8, 1850, by 15 persons, the majority of whom had been connected with the Petersville Church. First house of worship dedicated on day of constitution; present house of worship erected in 1889 on site about 50 feet from original building; Sunday school rooms added in 1947. Three sons of one of the deacons have entered the ministry from Mt. Moriah, Rev. George W. Hurt being the eldest of these ministerial brothers. Pastors: S. J. Atkins, 1850-1853; T. E. Reynolds, 1854-1856; H. G. Crews, 1856-1859; Gilbert Mason, 1859-1865; John R. Bagby, 1885-1913; St. George Abraham, 1913; E. G. Mintz, 1914-1915; Perry Mitchell, 1916; H. G. Hoffman, 1917; George A. Harris, 1918-1919; John T. Taylor, 1921; W. W. Smith, 1924-1936; Thomas P. Reynolds, 1935 to the present time.

MUDDY CREEK

Mrs. J. H. Jones

Constituted in 1774, with 20 to 30 members; Gospel first carried into this neighborhood by Jeremiah Walker, Rane Chastain and others; ten years without a pastor. For years, Samuel Woodfin, the Pastor from 1784-1832, Archer Pledge and John H. Stegar were the only male members of church. A number of notable revivals, the most fruitful being in 1842-1843, when 140 were added to the church, refreshed this congregation. In 1845, this was one of the larger and most influential Virginia Baptist county churches. New Sunday school rooms built in 1927. Daughter churches: Mt. Zion Colored and Fine Creek. Pastors Samuel Woodfin, 1784-1832; Edward Baptist, 1832-1835; Jesse Witt, 1837-1844; Cornelius Tyree; 1844-1856, 1857-1861, 1864-1867; T. E. Reynolds, 1856-1857; A. B. Woodfin, 1863; John R. Bagby, 1868-1913; J. R. Taylor, 1914-1921; J. Sydney Cobb, 1923-1924 and 1936-1945; W. Emory Trainham, 1925-1930; T. E. Goad, 1931-1935; Zane Grey Ross, 1945-1946; C. L. Gatling, 1947-1949; W. Cecil Smith, 1951-1954; J. Kenneth Clark, 1955 to the present time.

OLD POWHATAN

Mrs. Julia W. Anderson, Clerk of Church

Constituted in 1771, with 81 members, Dr. Semple, in his **History of Virginia Baptists**, published in 1810, wrote:

The Gospel was first carried here by Elders Webber and Anthony, at that time very young preachers. They were followed by Waller, the Craigs, and finally, by David Tinsley, who agreed to settle among them. The Word took a rapid spread; many were added, of whom several became preachers. Tinsley was very laborious among them until the year 1774, when he was clutched by the iron hand of persecution, and immured in Chesterfield prison. The forlorn state of the church, through his absence, stirred up the spirit of John DuPuy, who commenced first as exhorter and then preacher; and a few afterwards, when left by Tinsley, the church chose him as their pastor. Under his administration the church was blessed with a revival, in which there were large additions.

* * * * *

Few churches have raised more preachers than the above. Their number is no less than fourteen, viz., John and James DuPuy, Edward Maxey, George Smith, George Stoval Smith, Lewis Chadoin, B. Watkins, Noah Lacy, Thomas LaFon, Isaac Lookado, Josiah Gayle, John Woolridge, William Rousee and Samuel Roper.

Luther W. Moore, in his **A History of the Middle District Association**, published in 1886, adds the following information:

There was held at this church, in August 1775, one of the most important meetings ever held by any Christian people since the days of the Apostles. The General Association here met to consider and adopt a memorial to the State Legislature. It contemplated two objects; the freedom of the Colony from British rule, and the freedom of religion among the people of the Colony.

Concerning the first building and the time of its erection we do not have the record; six Sunday school rooms were added in 1947. A parsonage was erected, in cooperation with Red Lane, May Memorial and Fine Creek churches. This parsonage was purchased by the Powhatan and Red Lane churches in March, 1957, and sold in July of that year. Plans are in progress for the erection of a new parsonage by Powhatan and Red Lane churches. Daughter churches: Red Lane and Mt. Calvary, Colored. Pastors: David Tinsley, 1771-1774; John DuPuy, 1774-1784; George Smith, 1784-1804; John Woolridge, 1805-1841; Henry W. Watkins, 1841-1842; A. A. Baldwin, 1851-1852; T. E. Reynolds, 1853-1856; John Johns, 1856-1864; David B. Winfree, 1867-1871; 1886-1888; Luther W. Moore, 1872; 1876-1880; Aaron Jones, 1874-1875; W. J. E. Cox, 1880-1883; David M. Ramsey, 1883-1884; T. A. Reid, 1885 (Jan. to close of yr.); Robert H. Winfree, 1889-1899; W. Reynolds, 1900-1928; Edward W. Eanes, 1929-1930; Robert Stiff, 1931; 1934-1938; Curtis Cleveland, 1932-1933; H. D. Anderson, 1939-1956; Robert Gallier, March 1957 to present.

PIEDMONT

Miss Alma Whittington, former Clerk of the Church

Constituted in 1898, with 116 members, in schoolhouse just across the road from the first house of worship. In 1932, original church building was torn down and Sunday school and preaching services were held in home of Mr. P. R. Barden. Moved into new building, 1932; church burned in July, 1947; on June 26, 1949, first formal worship service held in new building, which included a sanctuary seating 250, basement with Sunday school rooms, kitchen and heating plant; seven-room parsonage constructed in 1951. Pastors: R. H. Rudd, 1900-1902; Landon Green, 1903; F. W. Putney, 1904-1905; H. D. Ragland, 1906-1910; E. G. Mintz, 1911-1915; H. P. Vinson, 1916; Geo. A. Harris, 1917-1919; S. T. Habel, 1921-1928; W. V. Smith, 1929-1933; R. D. White, 1934-1948; T. Graham Lester, Jr., 1949-1952; R. Lee King, 1953-1955; A. G. Almond, 1956 to present.

RED LANE

Mrs. James E. Simpson, Clerk of the Church

According to Moore's History, the earliest mention of Red Lane meeting-house occurs in the diary of Benjamin Watkins for 1796. An arm of the Powhatan Church, the congregation assembling at this place were supplied with preaching for nearly a half-century by John Woolridge. The church was constituted in September, 1846. Until May, 1847, church meetings were held here and at Powhatan on alternate days. Second house of worship erected in 1886; the property was deeded to Red Lane by Powhatan Church in 1892; three Sunday school rooms added in 1947 and five more in 1954. (See sketch for Powhatan Church for information concerning parsonage.) Pastors: Joseph Jenkins, 1846-1848; A. A. Baldwin, 1850-1851 and 1855-1857; Joseph G. Woodfin, 1853-1854; J. T. Watkins, 1857-1869; Luther W. Moore, 1870; R. W. Cridlin, 1875-1878; J. H. Boldridge, 1878; A. J. Reamy, 1878-1881; M. L. Wood, 1882; David M. Ramsey, 1884; F. R. Underwood, 1886-1887; David B. Winfree, 1887-1888; Robert H. Winfree, 1889-1893; J. W. Reynolds, 1894-1928; Edward W. Eanes, 1929-1930; John Robert Stiff, 1931 and 1934-1938; Curtis Cleveland, 1932-1933; H. D. Anderson, 1938-1956; Robert Gallier, 1957 to present.

SALEM

This church was an arm of old Chesterfield (Rehoboth) Church, numbering at the time of its constitution—November 21, 1802—117 members. Constituted by Eleazer Clay, Charles Forsee, William Flournoy and Benjamin Watkins. Concerning its first pastor, Thomas LaFon, Dr. Semple wrote in 1810: "Under his ministry, the church has increased by a comfortable revival in which 59 were added." Samuel Taylor, a ministerial son of the church, assisted its second pastor and succeeded him as pastor. Pastors: Thomas LaFon, 1802-1816; Leonard Nunnally, 1816-1845; Samuel Taylor, 1845-1863 and 1873-1874; J. A. Strachan, 1864-1865; R. W. Cridlin, 1866-1871; George J. Hobday, 1871-1872; students from Richmond College, 1872-1873; W. L. Fitcher, 1875-1876; J. A. Leslie, 1877-1880; J. McManaway, 1880 (5 months); A. J. Reamy, 1880-1882; I. M. Mercer, 1882 (4 months); M. L. Wood, 1883-1884; John A. Barker, 1885-1887; B. Trainham, 1888; Thomas J. Nettles, 1889-1904; S. L. Naff, 1906-1907; William Black, 1908; W. H. Lawson, 1910; Joel T. Tucker, 1913; Floyd P. Davis, 1914-1916; R. L. Matthews, 1917; C. T. Herring, 1920-1921; W. V. Smith, 1922-1925; O. E. Northen, 1926-1928; W. B. Wakon, 1929; George H. Lawrence, 1930-1931; Emmett Snellings, 1932; Gary A. Bousman, 1933-1934; Paul L. Bard, 1935-1946; Lawrence J. Seyler, 1947 and 1949-1950; Burrell Lucas, 1948; Herman F. Fleming, Jr., 1951; John Clark, 1952; William Sandman, 1953 to the present time.

SANDY CREEK

T. F. Rucker

This church was planted by Samuel Harris and James Reid; constituted in 1785 by 160 members. The year in which its first house of worship was dedicated is not known, but the present building was erected in 1910-1911 and is located about 200 yards from the original house. Six Sunday school rooms and a baptistry were added in 1933; more room is needed at this time. Pastors: David Ellington, 1779 to the election of John Scurry, who served the church until 1818; Paschal L. Towns, 1820-1828; Edmund Goode, 1830-1836; B. E. Goode, 1836-1837; J. T. Watkins, 1838-1848; John Johns 1848-1860; S. J. Atkins, 1860-1876; John R. Bagby, 1878-1913; E. G. Mintz, 1914-1915; H. P. Vinson, 1916; George A. Harris, 1917-1920; S. T. Habel, 1920-1941; H. N. Soyars, 1943-1956.

SECOND BRANCH

Mrs. J. E. Kinton, Clerk of Church

Eleazer Clay, Pastor of Rehoboth Church, preached regularly here until, enfeebled by age, he was compelled to give up his appointment. Second Branch constituted on August 9, 1828, by Charles Forsee and Jordan Martin, with about 100 members. Meeting-house and land, which had belonged to Liberty and Traylor churches were deeded by Thomas Burfoot, Sr., on August 11, 1810, and from that time known as Second Branch Church. Five Sunday school rooms were added in 1950; more room needed at this time. Pastors: Jno. H. Wilder, 1828-1836; Wm. B. Belcher, 1836-1860; R. N. Lee, 1861; Gilbert Mason, 1862-1865; Samuel Taylor, 1866-1868 and 1868-1873; Hosea Crowder, 1874-1875; J. A. Leslie, 1876-1877; Thos. J. Nettles, 1878-1895; Sidney M. Sowell, 1898-1900; T. Ryland Sanford, 1901-1902; R. H. Rudd, 1905; J. T. Haley, 1907-1908; M. W. Bloxom, 1909-1911; Floyd P. Davis, 1913-1915; C. C. Hedrick, 1918-1919; W. B. Ingram, 1921-1923; Mercer O. Clark, 1925-1928; W. E. Cullers, 1929-1936; E. M. Collier, 1937-1942; L. R. Freeman, 1943-1944; J. W. Rackley, Jr., 1945-1946; R. D. Stennett, 1947-1951; Allen B. Walsh, 1952; O. B. Falls, 1953-1956. Kenneth Bryan, 1957 to present.

SKINQUARTER

Rev. Lewis H. Sutton, Pastor

Constituted in 1778, by William Hickman, with 30 members. Dr. Semple, writing in 1810, said: "Skinquarter is a large . . . church of long standing. Under the care of William Hickman, they enjoyed some prosperous seasons. They also felt the bitterness of some adverse scenes. In 1785, they were favored with a revival which continued about two years." The Skinquarter Church historian wrote in 1953: "There have been three buildings known as the Skinquarter

Baptist Church. The first stood just at the top of the hill beyond the cemetery. The second, which stood within the limits of the cemetery, was built in 1860 and burned on December 25, 1890. Both of these were on the west side of the road. The sanctuary of the present building was erected in 1891." Eight Sunday school class rooms and a baptistry were added in 1953 and the building was renovated. A parsonage was purchased in 1921; in 1948, it was decided to build, in co-operation with the Chesterfield Church, a new parsonage.

Concerning the ministerial sons of Skinquarter Church, Dr. Semple wrote, in 1810: "Besides the pastors mentioned (John Goode and Charles Forsee), the church is owned as the mother of several other preachers, viz., Josiah Rucks, James Rucks, Walthall Robertson, Edmund Goode and Williamson H. Pittman. Since 1810, we know of two other ministers who went out of Skinquarter—R. H. Rudd and A. Bartow Rudd. Pastors: Wm. Hickman, 1778-1784; Jno. Goode, 1784-1790; Geo. Smith (Supply), 1790-1799; Charles Forsee, 1799-1834; Edmund Goode, 1835-1841; B. E. Goode, 1841-1847; John Johns, 1848-1855; David B. Winfree, 1855-1868; Luther W. Moore, 1869-1872; Samuel Taylor, 1873-1875; J. R. Wilkinson, 1875-1884; T. A. Reid, 1885-1886; J. M. Morris, 1888; Eldridge B. Hatcher, 1889; J. B. Williams, 1890-1899; St. George Abrahams, 1900-1910; W. H. Davis, 1910-1911; W. B. Miller, 1911-1913; E. V. Peyton, 1913-1915; F. B. Hart, 1915-1917; C. C. Hedrick, 1918-1919; R. J. Kirby, 1919-1921; W. B. Ingram, 1921-1923; Mercer O. Clark, 1924-1928; W. E. Cullers, 1928-1939; E. E. Northen, Jr., 1939-1941; J. Parks Hackney, 1942-1945; Zane Grey Ross, 1946-1950; F. Lawson Pankey, 1951-1954; T. R. Brock, 1955-1956; L. H. Sutton, 1957 to present time.

SOUTHAMPTON

Constituted in September, 1956, from Stratford Hills Mission which was organized in July, 1956, by the Extension Committee of the Middle District Association. Rev. Herman T. Stevens served the mission as missionary pastor until the time of constitution. First meeting place was 1 Longwood Drive, a residence purchased by the Middle District Association Extension Committee, in cooperation with the Extension Committee of the Board of Missions and Education, Baptist General Association of Virginia; second house of worship, Cherokee Golf Club, which, with five acres of land, is being purchased by the church; moved into new location in October, 1956. First Board of Deacons elected in January, 1958. Pastors: William T. Smith, April, 1957 to the present time.

SOUTHSIDE

Edward T. Justice, Clerk of Church

Constituted as independent church, October, 1948, from mission maintained by Branch's Baptist Church; moved into first house of

worship, September, 1948; new parsonage completed in spring of 1957; four-room house next to church rented for Junior Department of Sunday school in June, 1957. Pastors: Herbert F. Carter, June, 1955—January, 1956; Peter Lopresti, January, 1956—June, 1956; James A. Worsham, July, 1956—June, 1957; Mott Cumby, 1957 to present time.

TOMAHAWK

Mrs. A. L. Smith

The Gospel was first preached in this region by Samuel Harris and others. The church was constituted with 15 members, in 1777. The first house of worship was occupied in June, 1792, and was located on Hundred Road near Tomahawk Creek; the second building stood at the intersection of Hundred Road and Genito Road; the present building, dedicated in 1918, is located on Highway #360, one-half mile east of Swift Creek; Sunday school classrooms added in 1940; parsonage built in 1948. Pastors: Jeremiah Hatcher, 1777-1779; Wm. Hickman, 1779-1784; Geo. E. Smith, 1784-1791; James Rucks, 1792-1798; William Flourney, 1800-1817; Jordan Martin, 1818-1846; Beverly C. Hancock, 1846-1849; David B. Winfree, 1850-1855; Wm. S. Bland, 1855-1859; R. N. Lee, 1859-1860; Gilbert Mason, 1860-1865; Samuel Taylor, 1867-1875; J. R. Wilkinson, 1875-1884; T. A. Reid, 1885-1886; J. M. Moore, 1888; Eldridge B. Hatcher, 1889; J. B. Williams, 1890-1899; St. George Abrahams, 1900-1909; W. H. Davis, 1910; W. B. Miller, 1911-1913; E. V. Peyton, 1914; F. B. Hart, 1915-1916; C. C. Hedrick, 1918-1919; W. B. Ingram, 1921-1923; Mercer O. Clark, 1925-1928; W. E. Cullers, 1929-1939; E. E. Northen, Jr., 1940-1941; J. Parks Hackley, 1943-1945; Len E. Davis, 1947-1956; William McCullon, 1956 to the present time.

UNION

Morton Barden, Treasurer of Church

Constituted in 1833 by members who withdrew from Painville (sometimes called Chinquepin) Church, which had embraced the views of Alexander Campbell. The next year Union reported 34 members. Present building is second to be used by the church, the first being given to the colored people; five Sunday school rooms added and the building renovated in 1952. Pastors: Jesse Witt, 1838-1842; John Johns, 1842-1845; L. D. Horner, 1846-1848; 1850-1856; T. E. Reynolds, 1856-1861; R. N. Lee, 1863-1865; S. J. Atkins, 1865-1874; Jno. R. Bagby, 1874-1912; E. G. Mintz, 1914-1915; Geo. A. Harris, 1917-1919; S. T. Habel, 1921-1929; W. V. Smith, 1930-1937; W. B. Ingram, 1938-1940; R. D. White, 1942-1948; T. Graham Lester, 1949-1952; R. Lee King, 1953-1955; A. G. Almond, 1956 to the present time.

WINFREE MEMORIAL

Mrs. Betty Winfree Weaver

D. B. Winfree withdrew from Bethel Church and, with 26 members of that church who had been dismissed for attending a barbecue at Huguenot Springs, organized on June 12, 1852, a church which they called Jerusalem. In 1881, the building which was located about 2½ miles west of Midlothian, on Route 60, was moved to its present location. The church which, in 1888, had become inactive, was re-activated in 1900 when Robert H. Winfree offered to preach for the congregation. A new brick building was erected in 1924, and the name was changed to Winfree Memorial, in honor of David B. Winfree, its founder, and his son, Robert H. Winfree, pastor since its revival. The building was remodeled in 1952 and plans have been approved for a wing to be used for Sunday school and other educational purposes. Pastors: David B. Winfree, 1852-1872; John R. Wilkinson, 1873-1884; Robert H. Winfree, 1900-1940; Philip H. Tomlinson, 1942; Preston J. Taylor, 1944-1949; E. B. Price, 1950; R. Lee King, 1951-1953; Earl S. Cox, 1955-1956; Wesley N. Laing, 1957 to the present time.

THE HISTORY OF THE

APPENDIX B—LEADERS

I. ***MODERATORS:** Eleazer Clay, 1784-1794, 1795 (Oct.), 1797-1800, 1805-1813, 1815-1821; Bernard Todd, 1795 (May), 1796; Rane Chastain, 1801 (May), 1802-1803; James Saunders, 1801 (Oct.), 1804; Benjamin Watkins, 1814, 1823-1830; Jordan Martin, 1822, 1838-1839; Edmund Goode, 1831-1834; Valentine M. Mason, 1835-1836; John Woolridge, 1837; Jesse Witt, 1840-1841; Samuel Dorset, 1842; Joseph S. Walthall, 1843-1845; John H. Steger (first layman to serve as moderator), 1846-1853; Chastain Cocke, 1854; William Goode, 1855-1857; William Pope Dabney, 1858-1860, 1862-1863, 1866; Augustus Hancock, 1861; William Winfree, Jr., 1864; W. W. Hancock, 1865; F. H. Robertson, 1867; J. B. Goode, 1868-1871; William S. Bland, 1872-1875; Luther R. Chiles, 1876-1877; Captain D. M. Goode, 1878-1882; Judge Beverly A. Hancock, 1883-1887, 1898-1901; Hon. W. W. Baker, 1888-1892; John R. Bagby, 1893, 1902-1906; John S. Taylor, 1894-1895; L. R. Thornhill, 1896-1897; R. A. Justis, 1907-1910; Joseph E. Davidson, 1911; Dr. J. G. Loving, 1912-1914, 1924-1929, 1931; J. P. Sadler, 1915-1920; Hon. J. B. Watkins, 1921-1923; S. S. Hill, 1930; W. C. Shawen, 1932-1933; Howard L. Bryant, 1934-1935; Howard L. Arthur, 1936-1937; L. C. Northern, 1936-1939; M. Jackson White, 1940-1941; J. Levering Evans, 1942-1943; Samuel R. Stone, 1944-1945; H. E. Henderson, 1946-1947; H. D. Anderson, 1948-1949; Allen G. McCabe, 1950; R. E. Brown, 1951-1952; Roy S. Saunders, 1953; C. S. Trammell, 1954-1955; J. C. Green, 1956-1957; Moffett C. Booker, 1958.

II. **CLERKS:** John Williams, 1784 (May), 1788; Simeon Walton, (October), 1788 (May), 1795; Benjamin Watkins (October), 1795 (May), 1801, 1802-1813, 1815-1821; Bernard Todd, (October), 1801; Jordan Martin, 1814, 1824-1825; Beverly C. Hancock, 1822, 1836-1846; Matthew Winfree, 1823, 1826-1829, 1832-1835, 1847-1848; Samuel Dorset, 1830-1831; Samuel J. Winfree, 1849-1851; Joseph Goode, 1852-1953; William Pope Dabney, 1854-1857; H. Horace Hancock, 1858-1860; H. G. Crews, 1861-1864; Luther W. Moore, 1865-1868; J. F. Deans, 1869-1872; Dr. J. Lewis Dorset, 1873-1888; Hon. J. Haskins Hobson,

*Minutes of the Association are not available for the earlier meetings and there are serious gaps in the Minutes until 1824. Where Minutes do not give information concerning Moderator, we have accepted the statement made by Dr. Semple that "From the time of the division, in 1783, until this time (1810), Rev. Eleazer Clay has generally acted as moderator, a few sessions excepted."

1889-1913; H. W. Goode, 1914-1918; Dr. J. G. Loving, 1919-1923; R. T. Marsh, 1924-1931; B. L. Mozingo, 1932-1936; B. Gary Blake, 1937-1940; Edward W. Eanes, 1941; Ortie E. Bradshaw, 1942-1943; Paul G. Wiley, 1944-1945; Ryland O. Reamy, 1946; G. H. Lawrence, 1947-1950; A. D. Clark, Jr., 1951-1953; H. A. Latta, 1954; Mrs. J. F. Anderson, 1955; Charles W. Gibson, 1956-1958.

III. SUPERINTENDENTS (OR VICE - PRESIDENTS) OF WOMAN'S MISSIONARY UNION: Miss Bettie B. Meade, 1885-1890; Miss Genevieve Rudd, 1890-1894; Miss F. Estelle Rudd, 1894-1906; Miss Lottie A. Redford, 1906-1908; Mrs. A. J. Hurt, 1908-1910; Mrs. Joel T. Tucker, 1910-1914; Mrs. R. A. Justis, 1914-1917; Mrs. J. T. Bass, 1917-1920; Mrs. R. H. Bruce, 1920-1925; Mrs. T. W. Page, 1925-1928; Mrs. R. D. White, 1928-1934; Mrs. George F. Murdoch, 1934-1949; Mrs. F. Kimsey, 1949-1951; Mrs. H. E. Jackson, 1951 to the present time.

2090

